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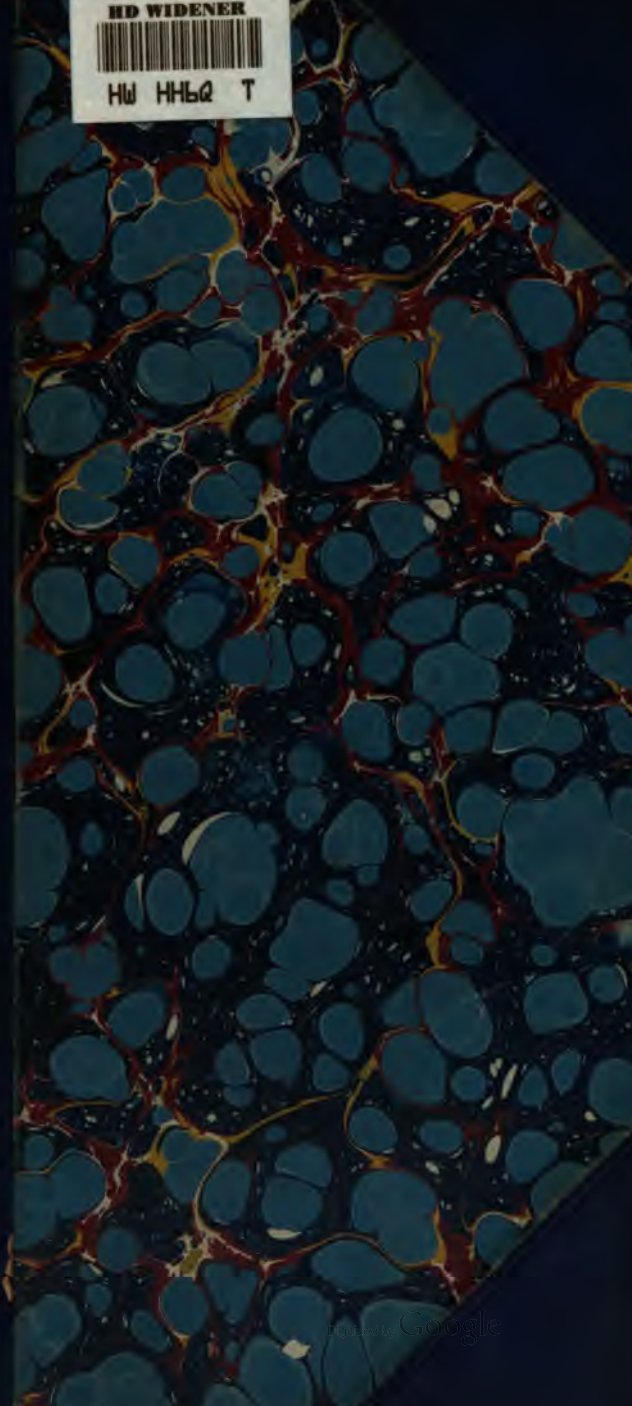
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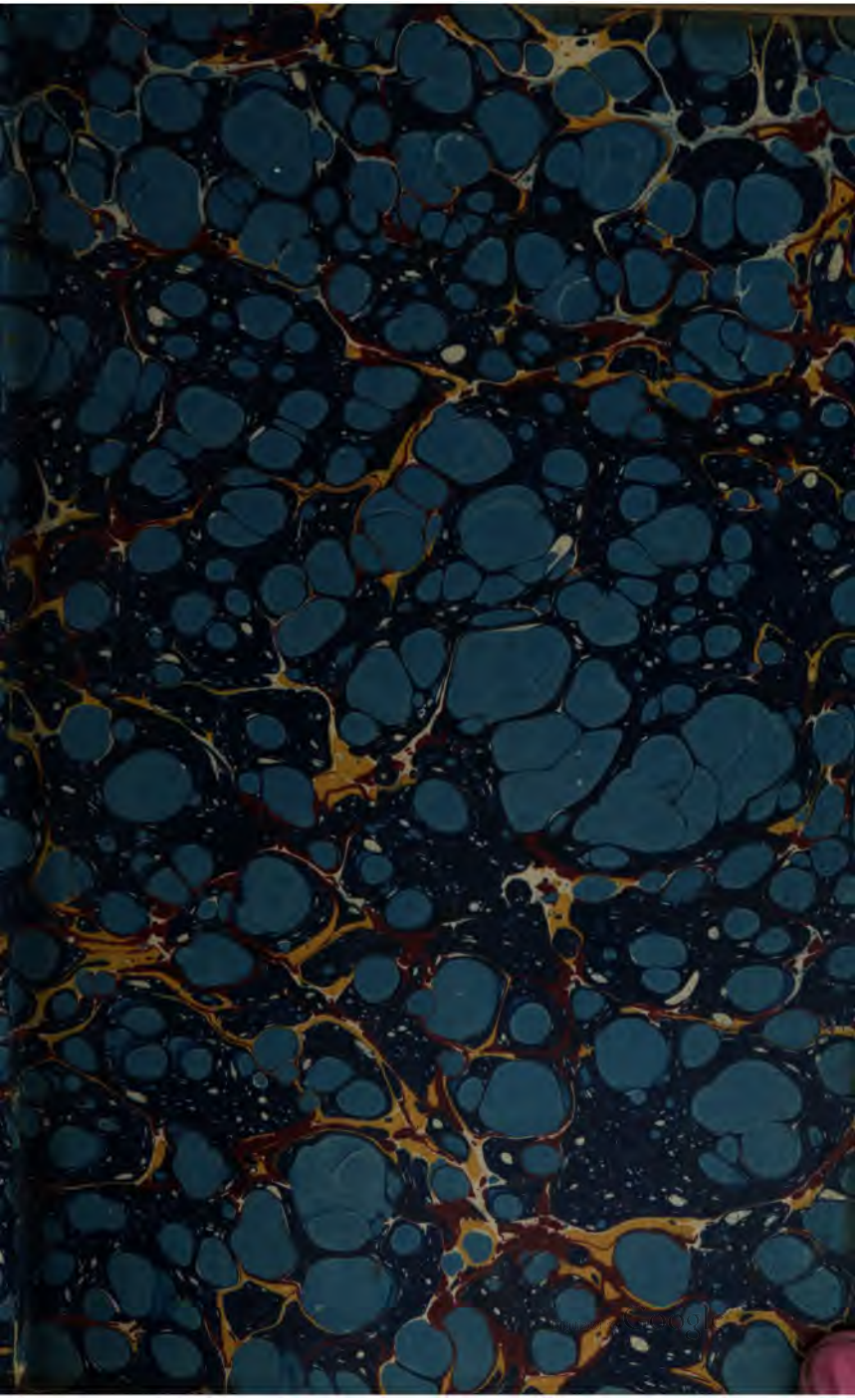
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NEWTON DOGVANE.

A STORY OF

ENGLISH COUNTRY LIFE.

BY

FRANCIS FRANCIS.

WITH

Illustrations by Teeq.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

21

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NEWTON DOGVANE.

CHAPTER I.

DE OMNIBUS REBUS.

SINCE Newton's first stay, he had made a flying visit or two to Crookham, having a strong desire to improve his acquaintance there, though he seldom stayed beyond a few hours. Why he should do so, really we can hardly say. Perhaps, if any young lady between the ages of seventeen and seven-and-twenty should happen to glance over these pages, she may happen to help us to a solution; as it really does seem strange to some people for a young gentleman to ride or drive

some twenty miles into the country, just to pay a mere visit of ceremony, you know, or upon some equally trivial errand, and, when taken to task on the subject, to turn very red in the face, and be unable to give any good, valid, or sufficient reason why he goes so far to do, upon the face of it and by his own showing, so little. For the last week somehow he had not been to Crookham; the fact is, "he had been there a good deal of late, and business required his presence in town." Beyond this we are compelled to state, that the ladies—that is, Charlotte and Bessie—*were in town*. They had come up on a short visit to a friend, and were busy with winter fashions, or some of those things with which ladies will be busy, very busy at certain times. Ned, too, was in town; but he always appeared to have engagements, which prevented his being much with them. Nobody, at least none of his friends, knew with whom or where they were kept. The Captain, too, had a good deal of

business on his hands just then ; he expected to be ordered to the East very shortly, and had many duties to perform. Accordingly the chief duty of esquiring the ladies about fell upon Newton ; and it is remarkable that, though business prevented his going down to Crookham, it never for a moment interfered with any engagement he might have with the sisters ; and if ever a man was indefatigable in his efforts to procure amusement, or anything else that was or could be desired in the great world of London by two young ladies, Newton Dogvané was that man. Theatre, concert, show—show, concert, theatre ; they froze on Mont Blanc—they thawed with Gordon Cumming. Paris, St. Petersburg, Constantinople, the North Pole, the South Pole, the Far West, the Extreme East—here, there, anywhere, everywhere ; “they put a girdle ’bout the earth in forty minutes” at Wyld’s ; they went into raptures over Grisi, into fits over Robson, and fast asleep (after

the first admiration of the scenic adaptation, &c., had died away) over Kean. They enjoyed themselves very much; and even the haughty Charlotte showed that she could appreciate the pleasures of London, although she might curve her beautiful lip at some of its follies. Well, and why shouldn't they enjoy themselves, Mr. Cynic? Suppose they had seen most of it before, it would bear seeing again; and they were young and lively, not old and *blasé*, like some folks who have seen it all, mayhap, hundreds of times. Newton was walking down Regent-street one afternoon with one of the sisters on each arm, when he was accosted by a gentleman with a thing like a slice out of a white voluminous boa under one arm, and a very shiny and diminutive black-and-tan *tarrier*, as it is called, under the other; while two more hairy canines, resembling black monkey-skin muffs, were towed along behind him by a string.

“Ax yer pard’n, sir; but could I speak a

word?" Newton stopped, of course. "It's Tightner, sir. Ax yer pard'n, ladies. They're war'nted all on 'em free from wice; wouldn't bite a babby, nar a one on 'em."

"Oh! your dog's dead," said Newton.

"In regard o' that, sir, I were agoin' to ask you, sir," continued Tightner, "if there worn't no little balance on that 'ere pinter? Mungo, sir, as you recklects, you had him away on trial, and it worn't settled up; and I were thinkin' it strange I hadn't a hearn on you. It worn't not quite the right thing, sir, to take a poor cove's dorgs away like that."

"Excuse me one minute," said Newton to the sisters; "would you mind my speaking to this man? I won't detain you a second."

And as Bessie and Charlotte stopped to look into a bonnet-shop, which was fortunately close behind them, he once more turned to Mr. Tightner, who resumed:—"And a cove, too, as has had misfortins. No, it worn't 'ansum."

"Mr. Tightner," said Newton, waxing

wroth, not only at Tightner's tone, but the still hated memory of Mungo; "Mr. Tightner, do you see that gentleman in blue there?" pointing to a policeman, who appeared to be narrowly regarding Mr. Tightner from the opposite side of the way. "If you presume to address me, or annoy me on the subject of that disgusting brute, which, as you are well aware, was paid for some twenty times over, I'll call on that gentleman to settle our differences between us."

This, of course, did not at all suit Mr. Tightner's views, and he changed his tone for one that sounded much more sincere and earnest. Poor devil! he looked awfully hard-up, and lanthorn-jawed, and his ankle-jacks were not the ankle-jacks of yore. In fact, he looked really worn, miserable, and wretched.

"Well, it's a hard thing to a cove as has had misfortins, and twenty-three bulls, and the sweetest lot of tarriers as wos, bit by a &c. &c. &c. &c.'d cur, as creeped into the

kennel like a snake in the grass, and mad as a hatter, and bit 'em all, leastways one bit t'other, and they was all obligated to be destroyed—and that 'ere beautiful bull as weighed eighty pound, and as I 'adn't the 'art to kill, and got out at dead o' night, and right upon the kids' beds, and them kids kivered over in the blankets too, and worried them blankets all to bits o' fiddle-strings, tryin' to get at 'm, and the kids a screamin' orful, till he left 'em, and run down into the pit, where I shut 'im in, and shot 'im through the winder, which in consekens of the frit it gi'n her, Mrs. Tight have had a fit, and took to gin séwere, and haves the speechless 'plexy twice a-day reglar, and the youngest ain't never recovered the frit nuther, but sits crunched up in vun corner o' the room, and shivers jist like death when you comes anighst 'im. The doctors says it's a lunacy. And it's all broke me right up into bits. A cove as had a 'stablishment, too, obliged to pad the hoof, and I ain't the

cove I was, along of havin' the 'orrors a watchin' that 'ere poor kid, when Missus Tight were down; and no wittles aint good for a cove neither. Things is gallus bad, they is. Buy a tarrier, sir? There's a beauty—nothink but bad luck ever since I sold you that 'ere Mungo, and you so straight-forrard in the deal, too—no, nothink but bad luck."

A sudden thought seemed to seize Mr. Tightner.

"There, sir, I knows I done yer on that 'ere Mungo, he worn't worth hangin'. Still, it's a while since I done the straight thing, and misfortunes weighs 'eavy on a cove. Take him for nuffin, sir. P'r'aps that'll change it, and bring good luck again. Who knows? I never thought o' that," and with something almost like a tear rolling down Mr. Tightner's dirty face, he held out the terrier—a really handsome little beast, if extreme ugliness be beauty—at arm's length, and tried to push it into Newton's hands.

"Nonsense, Tightner, I don't want the dog.

I'm sorry for you. Don't be a fool. Here's a sovereign. Be a man; why don't you cut dog-fancying?"

"I'd cut it t'morrer, sir, if I knowed any other line open, for I never done no good at it. But 'ow is one to cut it, and 'ow live?"

"Where do you live?"

"I'm always to be hearn on at Joe Lebeau's, sir; and thankye, I'm sure—t'aint every one as ud—and it's the first bit o' coin as has crossed my hand this blessed week. But take the little 'un, sir, he's thorough-bred, and game as pheasants. P'r'aps the ladies—"

"No, no, there, that'll do, I won't forget you. Now go, there's a good fellow, for I can't wait any longer."

And, obedient to the wish, Mr. Tightner touched his hat, and, with renewed thanks, disappeared round the corner, turning round when he got there to spit on the coin, and saying to himself:—

"Now that 'ere gent's a gent—a good gent.

If all gents was like him, there wouldn' be so many of us poor devils about. I done 'im brown, I did—I'm 'ard up—I tries the leary on 'im—and he don't even blow up. I wishes he 'ad. I tells 'im of my misfortunes, and he gives me a suv'ring where some gents ud a giv' me a month! Well, he shall have the 'and-somest toy tarrier in London for nuffin, if it takes me six months to prig it. If he shan't, may the next bull as goes mad devour Alec Tightner, body, boots, and all, his blessed kids, and the old ooman into the bargain!"

Newton turned towards the shop into which Charlotte and Bessie had gone to make some little purchase. They were in the act of coming out, when he saw a man—dressed as a gentleman, and whom he had noticed as having passed the shop once or twice, and looked in on each occasion—push deliberately and very offensively against the sisters as they came out of the doorway, and then, taking off his hat, begin a pretended apology. The

insult was so pointed and so gross that Newton, without a moment's hesitation, stepped up to the *gentleman*, and, burning with rage, hit him one flush blow full on the nose, and with such hearty good will that the fellow went spinning into the shop which Bessie and Charlotte had just left, and, with the blood spirting from his nose, fell prostrate over a chair. Thus, in the language of the ring, Newton gained "the first two events" at one hit.

The proprietor, who had seen the insult also, here came forward.

"Now then! where are you coming? and what d'ye mean by letting yer nose bleed all over my premises?" he said, as he took the stranger by the collar, and, dragging him to the door, kicked him forth again into the street.

"Wilton Crescent," said Newton to a cabman, whom he had hastily hailed. "I'll see you in the evening," he said to the sisters, whom he had put into the cab. "Don't be alarmed; it's all right; good bye."

The cab drove off, and Newton turned again to the shop, drawing forth his card-case as he did so. But the gentleman was gone.

“Bless you, sir, he’s round the corner like a shot, sir,” said the proprietor, “and ain’t I just glad, sir, you dropped into him. Why, sir, that feller’s a reglar nuisance here. I’ve seen him annoy ladies many a time, sir, and I’ve often expected to see him catch it. But he’s generally pretty artful, sir, and doesn’t speak to ladies when there’s a gen’leman with ’em, sir. I’ve often thought I should like to kick him, sir; much obliged to you, sir, for affording me the opportunity. I don’t care a rap about the consequences, sir; a party’s no right to go bleeding his nose like a stuck pig all over another party’s shop, sir, has he, sir?”

“Certainly not,” said Newton. “Do you know his name?”

“No, sir, I do not.”

"Well, it's of no consequence. Good day."

"Good day, sir, and I thank you, sir."

"Nothing like a little of the noble art of self-defence on an emergency," said Newton to himself, as he walked away.

Winter had made its appearance at Crookham; the early morning ephemeral white frosts had changed by degrees into good hard sound, black ones; a smart fall of snow had taken place; and, when you went out into the morning air, your breath appeared as if it came from the waste-pipe of a steam-engine, and your moustachios—if you wore them, as many folks do now-a-days who would not have ventured to ten years ago—were speedily covered by an unpleasant moisture; and, after a preliminary cough or two, you inhaled the sharp, bracing air, and puffed it forth again roundly and heartily, without fear of coughs, colds, or their attendant evils, springing from such a rough, but honest visitor. Cold!

bless you! there wasn't a cold in a hemisphere of it. It wasn't like your insidious London frost and fog, that creeps into your lungs upon false pretences and settles there; but a fair, open friend, who comes to see you, Christmas-like, once a-year, and holds out his hand to you, saying: "Here I am, old boy. You must have me, you see. Glad to find you hearty and strong. The compliments of the season to you—plum-puddings and pantomimes! What are you shivering at? Poke up the fire, if you don't like the cold; or, better still, turn out and take a good brisk walk; never mind a little snow—that won't hurt you. D'ye think I'm not just as good as any of the other seasons of the year? and just as wholesome, eh? Ay, and just as beautiful to look at, too? Look out, man, and judge. There are no flowers to be seen, or only one, perhaps, a monthly rose, solitary, and lovely in its solitariness. But look at those trees, how sharply each twig is defined

against the clear sky behind; how they feather away in their delicate tracery, each spray bearing a tiny line of snow, and decked with nature's gems, which require no Dutch jewellers, no cutting or setting to show *them* off; but are fashioned by a Hand that transcends all earthly skill. What a wonderful network! more fantastic than any fairy scene called into view by Aladdin's lamp. See those tall fir-trees with their broad branches, sombre and surly, bending unwillingly each under the weight of a snow-wreath, dazzling by its contrast with the bed it reposes on. Look again at the sturdy yew and brave old holly, with their dark-green foliage and shining red berries. Carry your gaze beyond, over hill, valley, and plain, all clad in my silver livery. How broad and fair it is. Is spring more beautiful than this, think you, with its buds, its young tints of green, and its soft breath? Is summer, with its thick foliage, and its flowers, its deep shades, and

sparkling brooks? Is autumn, with its rich fruits, its golden hues, and its glorious harvest? Not a whit. Trust me, we are all beautiful in turn, lovely and lovable as Him Who made us. So, once more, welcome."

It was evening at Crookham. The fire shone bright within, and the moon shone bright without. The curtains were drawn. The urn hissed, and hot-cakes were browning deliciously in front of the fire. Sir John Vasey had just driven over for a quiet cup of tea and a rubber. Charlotte was at the tea-table; Mrs. Bowers was mending some domestic garment; Sissy was tormenting her pet terrier; the gentlemen were silently gazing at the fire, as if conversation for a moment was exhausted; Bessie was not in the room.

"Where is Bessie?" asked Mrs. Bowers.

"Upstairs, ma," answered Sissy.

"Go and tell her tea is ready, dear;" and

Sissy, catching up her favourite in her arms, proceeded on the errand.

Bessie was in her own bedroom; such a delicious little innocent gem of a bedroom it was, with its pure white furniture, and its dainty simple toilette on one side, its writing-table on the other, and its huge old-fashioned easy-chair between, where she was wont to kneel night and morning. Above the back of the chair was the window—a little circular one—surrounded on the outside by thick ivy. It was open, and Bessie was half leaning, half kneeling with her arms upon the back of the chair, looking out into the garden.

Have you ever, reader, looked out of window into an old-fashioned garden, upon a bright moonlight night, when the snow is on the ground, and not a breath of wind stirring? Nothing can equal the intense stillness; not a bird, bat, beetle, or

any kind of insect is moving; not a leaf rustles; and, if a distant watch-dog should chance to break the silence, the quiet that ensues is the more intense. As the calm steals on you, and sinks into your soul, you glance from the deep shadows below to the blue sky, so still, so boundless above. You feel lifted from earth, and the spirit expands; you drink in a host of new and strange sensations. The rust, the meanness, and baseness of the world drops from you. You feel better. Your heart swells with praise and happiness, as if you cared no longer for every-day life, and you could sit, and gaze, and worship for ever and ever. Alas! that you should ever go back to the world—alas! that there should still be temptations in store for you! What were Bessie's thoughts? She felt the influence of the silence and the beauty of the night, although, apparently, the scene did not entirely engross her attention. What

could she be thinking of? A maiden's thoughts, who can tell? Something very like a sigh escaped her, and an impatient movement of the head showed that all was not so calm within as without. At this moment something cold and moist touched her neck; she turned round with a slight exclamation and a start. It was the nose of Sissy's favourite, which that very unromantic young lady had placed against her sister's neck, to break her reverie, Sissy having entered the room as noiselessly as a cat.

"Dreaming again, Bethie!" said the incorrigible little monkey. "Oh dear! Oh dear! I'm afraid it's a bad cathe. Tea's ready," and she scampered away through the door, singing, "Love will creep in where he daur na well be theen," while Bessie, after allowing the blush her sister's remark had called up to subside, and made what slight toilet she needed by the light of the moon, slowly followed her.

"No hunting for a month to come, Sir John," said Uncle Crabb, "unless we've a sudden change."

"I'm very much afraid not, Charles," said the Baronet, despondingly. "The Tramp will be as frisky as a four-year-old when he does turn out; and as for Nanny and Old Barkiss, there'll be no holding them. I wish that young scamp Ned was at home, to give them a good pounding through the snow by way of exercise. What a frost it is, to be sure, and not Christmas yet! It looks as if it were set in for ever. I do wish the Captain or Ned were here. Buncomb says the lower Holt is full of woodcocks, and the ponds are covered with wildfowl, for I have taken care to keep them constantly broken round the edges. What is Ned so long about in town?"

"I really hardly know. He seems to have a good deal to do at the Horse Guards. But I suppose there's something else in the wind.

Boys will be boys. You know, Sir John, we were young once. I taxed Rainbow about it the other day, but I couldn't find out much."

"Uncle means Mr. Dogvane," said Bessie. "The gentleman who—"

"Man with the dog who committed suicide in the bean-field," said Uncle Crabb, shortly. "Shot the first cock by mistake."

"Ah! to be sure. Yes, I recollect now. Not a bad sort of youngster for a Londoner."

"Very good sort of youngster for anywhere, Sir John," quoth Uncle Crabb.

"Well-conducted, honourable young fellow," said Mr. Bowers. "Ned may take a lesson from him."

"Bethie dear, Trip don't care about having hith tail trodden on, and you know. Thir John never taketh cweam," said young Torment.

"Then you had better take Trip out of the way, and from before the fire, and hand

Sir John his cup yourself," said Charlotte, a little sharply. "You know that you are always Sir John's Hebe. Leave playing with Trip, or he'll bite you ; and hand round the tea-cake."

Sissy never dared to measure weapons with Charlotte ; so she did as she was told without another word.

"By the way, Charles, both you and Edward's friend are revenged upon an enemy," said the Baronet, as he replaced his empty cup on the table. "Squire Driffield's bull got into one of the ponds last night, and the ice, or something else, was too much for him, and he was 'found drowned,' as the coroners say, early this morning. Some say the poachers drove him in ; however, there's an end of him."

"I'm glad he has saved me the trouble of shooting him," answered Uncle Crabb. "But the squire has been marvellously civil ever since Stevens cut his face open for him. I

wish you had been there to have seen it. It was the sharpest and cleverest piece of workmanship you ever saw."

"I suspect other things have occurred to tame him a little," said the Baronet. "All has not been going on as it should there for some time past; and there are whispers of his being sold up. I should be sorry if it were to prove true, although he is anything but a good neighbour."

"Dingham is a nice place, and capable of great improvement," said Mr. Bowers. "If it should be sold, Sir John, I hope you will become the purchaser."

"Oh, do buy Dingham, Sir John," said Sissy, earnestly. "Do, do buy it. Thuch a nithe plathe for picknickth; and that nathty Thquire never would let one even look at it."

"It is not yet for sale, Hebe; and if it were, I doubt if the purchase-money would be quite within my power. By the way, who is the little cottage at Dingham Lane End fitting

up for? I see they are enlarging and improving the stables, and laying out the garden afresh, and making all kinds of alterations."

"Oh! haven't you heard, Sir John?" said the ladies, all at once.

"No, my dears, or I shouldn't ask."

"Well, it's a Mrs. Spelthorne—Honourable Mrs. Spelthorne, I think I heard her called. She's a young widow, very pretty, gay, and rich. Her husband was killed, or died of fever or something, in the Burmese war. She rides, and drives, and hunts sometimes. She was there one day last week giving orders, and drove down in the nicest little pony chaise, with the sweetest pair of ponies ever seen. She'll be quite an acquisition. Ned said he knew her—was introduced to her in town, and she's a most charming, agreeable person. But then, Ned's no judge. A Mr. Carysford—do you know him?—introduced him to her at a review; and Ned said he believed that Carysford was trying to hook on there, because

she has plenty of money, and everyone knows that he hasn't; and Ned's going to introduce us to her; only, we'll wait and see *what she's like first.*"

All this was told as three young ladies alone can tell one story, and Sir John nodded to one or the other in turn.

"Carysford?" he said, "Carysford? Could it have been Carysford of —? Rather a scamp he was, if I have heard aright."

"Oh dear, no! this is the *Honourable* Mr. Carysford. Captain Stevens knows him, I think."

"Well, my dears, there are such things, you know, as even honourable scamps. Scampishness is a very widely diffused attribute, and appertains both to high and low."

"Ah! I don't think this can be the same. I think Mr. Dogvane said he had met him at the mess at Hounslow."

"I daresay there's a scamp or two has dined there in his time," said the still uncon-

vinced Sir John. "But what's all this I hear about the Sharps? Why, there's the very dickens to pay. There's Tom Sharp walking about in the queerest semi-clerical coat and tie ever seen, and a silk strait waistcoat; and the Baroness and her sister teaching the children to howl dismally—chanting I suppose they call it—and they're all grown horribly sanctimonious all of a sudden."

"There's a new clergyman at Cowdean," said Mrs. Bowers, "who has very High Church notions, it appears, and who is making considerable alterations in the church and the service."

"Well, but—!" and Sir John paused.

"One of the new lights," said Uncle Crabb, "part of the Jesuit scheme for turning bad Protestants into worse Roman Catholics, Dissenters into Infidels, the Church into an opera-house or a bear-garden."

"But the Sharps?" said Sir John, in some perplexity.

"The Honourable and Rev. Cecil Courtenay is a *bachelor*," answered Uncle Crabb—spitting it out viciously.

"Oh, indeed!" said the Baronet, with a prolonged whistle.

"Uncle!" said the three young ladies.

"Fact, my dears;" quoth Uncle Crabb, briefly.

"There was a Cecil Courtenay at college with me," said the Baronet, "I daresay it's the same; a woeful bad lot. he was; a man who never could turn out well. If it's the same, and I'll make some inquiry, give him a wide berth."

"Well, there he is," said Uncle Crabb, "with his altar-cloth ten feet by five, gorgeously embroidered, crosses, candlesticks six feet high, Covent-garden intoning, and heaven knows what besides—called here the other day—you were all out, so *I* received him. I did not think it worth while to tell you of it, especially as I don't think he's likely to call

again. Not his parish. What did he want here? Comes here again, I'll pitch him out of window, sure as my name's Crabb—I mean Bowers. Confound these fellows—poke their noses in anywhere. No keeping them out." And Uncle Crabb jerked out the foregoing sentences with great indignation, and then drank of a hot cup of tea in such haste that his eyes fairly watered. Mr. Bowers smiled at his brother's earnestness, while Mrs. Bowers looked on with a look of half fright and half astonishment. "Clear the table, and let us have the card-table round." And in due time, altars and candlesticks, and the Honourable and Rev. Cecil, and everything else, to all appearance, was forgotten in the mysteries of the rubber—while the girls sat round the fire and conversed in low tones, so as not to interrupt the proceedings.

CHAPTER II.

NEWTON BECOMES A MIGHTY HUNTER.

“DON’T you hunt, Mr. Dogvane?” This question had been asked by a dark-whiskered, heavy-moustachioed, *roué*-looking man at the mess dinner, to which Newton had gone, in obedience to Capt. Steven’s invitation. Newton had found himself placed next to the Hon. Mr. Carysford, and a few incidental remarks had passed between them; and when the above question was asked, although he blushed to own it, he at once said :

“No; hunting was not one of his accomplishments.”

The Honourable Carysford’s eyebrows curved

with astonishment at the answer. "What sort of an animal could this be? A fella who didn't hunt! It was of no use talking to him." And the honourable Carysford was still civil and polite, but he did not talk a great deal to him throughout the rest of the evening.

Newton felt small, very small, particularly when the conversation turned on hunting, and everyone had more or less of his own or a friend's experiences to tell upon the all-absorbing topic. He made a mental vow. His education had been neglected. He listened and drank in all that he heard, and went away from the dinner with a mind inflamed with hunting pictures and adventures, and an anxiety to become a sort of Nimrod secundus. His father had long talked of retiring from business, and Newton had done and said everything in his power to encourage the idea; and now it occurred to him that if he could only induce the Governor to get out of it, and to

take some nice little place in a hunting country the longings of his heart might be fully and easily gratified. He spoke of it to Ned, who also favoured the idea of at least getting out of trade.

“What did his governor want to keep on coining the yellow-boys for? Hadn’t he more than he ever could spend, and enough to leave, and to spare too, for his son? What did he want with more? Hang it; let the business look after itself. It wasn’t jolly, that deuced high stool in the City; and that lean head-clerk, with the consumptive tie and the pallid choke, wasn’t a jolly-looking fellow by any means; and the younger clerks weren’t jolly either. There was a gentish look about them—not but what they might be jolly enough in *their* way—but it was a beery sort of way, not his (Ned’s) idea of jolliness. They weren’t the sort of companions for a fellow who wished to be all right and jolly. Look at him, going to the

East—at least, it wouldn't be long first. Seeing Eastern manners and customs, as Pips says, and getting into seraglios guarded by black eunuchs with drawn scimitars—regular conventicles, my boy—and fighting Cossacks with a lot of jolly, half-mad Bashi-Bazouks, and galloping right and left over the country, and bivouacking about like a pic-nic party, and smoking no end of big pipes over your fire, with jolly comrades, talking over the adventures of the day, and singing songs, and making love, and all that. Hey, my boy! wasn't that jolly? and didn't he wish he was him? and why shouldn't he be jolly too? In his way—in his way? Of course he couldn't expect to be as jolly as he should be; still, hunting three days a week, with a jolly crack pack, and lots of jolly fellows, wasn't a bad idea of jolliness, after all. No, if he'd take his advice,—sell out, hunt three days a week, and be jolly." And we really are inclined to subscribe to the latter

idea of jolliness, though we have trifling doubts about the former.

Newton determined to do, if possible, more than he had yet done to induce his father to relinquish business; and, to that end, he engaged his mother upon his side, winning her to his views by a species of moral mine, which he from time to time exploded on her in the shape of skilfully-prepared pictures of a delightful location, where there were pleasant tea-drinking and whist-playing neighbours; and where there were agreeable clergymen, with schools and charities, refuges and Dorcases, to visit, over which she might be lady patroness, and excite her religious system by the stimulants afforded by perpetual dropping upon, and sittings in judgment over, the sins and peccadilloes of her poorer neighbours. Not that she was naturally of an uncharitable disposition; but it seems to have become quite an institution, or rather a system, for "the pots" of this

world to be for ever abusing "the kettles"—for the worms to be turning upon the beetles—and for people to hang on like grim death to the motes in their neighbours' eyes while possessed of the most desperate blindness to the beams in their own. Never was there so much cant disguised under the name of religion as now; never was there so much straining at gnats and gobbling of camels. How can a country pretend to be religious which professes to believe that "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven," and which presents at the same time such a phenomenon as the maladministration of the church property and the incomes of our bishops, to say nothing of the want of truth and honest principle from one end of the country to the other? Cant consequently supersedes religion under such circumstances; and this is the worst and most odious form of atheism. But the good

lady knew little of these things: she was of and on the surface, and these societies were to be the safety-valves to her surplus energy and curiosity, under the fiction of charity. She could amuse herself to the bent of her inclination, and at the same time fancy herself on the high road to Heaven; and this, once fixed firmly on her mind, soon worked wonders. When a man's family unite in a plot against him, what chance has he?—constant droppings will wear away a stone. Mr. Dogvane was not a statue; or, if he was, it was one of clay, already more than half softened. He inclined his ear greedily to his son's pictures, which it is needless to pun on by calling both "sun and sunny pictures," though we will do so for the simple reason that it occurs to us. Mr. Dogvane's "ear did seriously incline" to his son's pictures of field sports. His experiences at Crookham, &c., had been related, over and over again, to no unattentive auditor, and Mr. Dogvane had

been secretly, and without mentioning it at home, in treaty with a wealthy party to relieve him of the toils of business, and Mr. Dogvane's was a good business, and one to be coveted by well-to-do folks; he had made it slowly, steadily, and solidly, not by any extravagant speculations, but by living closely and sparingly for long years in the little house at Brixton, and carefully improving his business with his gains.

It had been his intention originally to sham ill-health previous to announcing his determination, as an excuse for retiring. And when he found his wife and son both jumping with his views, he smiled quietly to himself; but, though he said nothing, he noted their words, that he might bring them forward *as reasons* for what he did. So, when all the preliminaries were settled, he informed them of the fact, and they were accordingly not a little surprised. And though secretly pleased, Mrs. Dogvane "thought that—yes, she really *did*

think—that is, she *didn't* think—Mr. Dogvane would have taken such a proceeding without letting her know of it—after having been married now six-and-twenty years, three months, and a week, and never having anything hidden from her all that time. That now—well! There—that was always the way with men. They didn't mind if they *ruined* their families.”

“My dear!” quoth Mr. Dogvane, deprecatingly. “Ruined their families! Why, Wheedle and Diginem tell me I’ve got out admirably—and as *one* of the first solicitors in the City, they ought to know—and you know I’ve seventy thou—”

“Well, my love, I didn’t mean that. You know I didn’t. You’ve worked hard and always been careful, I will say that, and you do deserve a rest at your age.”

“My age, my dear! I’m only fifty-three, hale and hearty as I was at twenty.”

The old hypocrite! He hadn’t meant to be

so hale and hearty though, if by chance he had not found Mrs. Dogvane so complying.

"I didn't mean that either, dear; you're as strong and well as ever you were—thanks to those flannel waistcoats. Where you would have been though, if it hadn't been for them and the tansy gruel,"—and Mrs. Dogvane nodded her head as if she really could not express. "So you're a dear old duck; and now, I suppose, we must begin and look out for a place in the country."

"Exactly so," said Mr. Dogvane, in something the same tone as the Beefeater uses towards Whiskerandos in the "Critic."

He really was in luck. Every one seemed to propose the very things he wanted himself, and feared he should have the most difficulty in obtaining. It was extraordinary. Here was Mrs. Dogvane, who had always disliked the country, the first to propose an adjournment thither.

All this time, however, our friend Newton was not idle. Burning to distinguish himself

in the hunting field, it was evident to him that to do so he must first learn to ride across country ; and the riding-school of a Mr. Cheeker offering peculiar facilities for gentlemen desirous of equestrian experience, he repaired there and commenced a course of lessons at ten guineas the course, and might have been observed pounding the sawdust and taking flights of three hurdles and under, and of tasteful fences composed of green fagots—neither of them too high or too unyielding, you may be sure—any time within the next month or six weeks. Here he made the acquaintance of a Mr. Chilliwn, a young gentleman who rejoiced in a situation under Government in the Queen's Redundancy Office*—an office apparently instituted for

* In case the author should be accused of a species of plagiarism in consequence of any slight similarity between the Redundancy and the Circumlocution Offices, he begs to say that this sketch, in common with many other parts of this novel, was written long before the appearance of the Circumlocution,

the purpose of grounding the future *employés* of the Government in cribbage, double dummy, a knowledge of the attributes of bottled stout, and a perfect acquaintance with the politics of the day, if the *Times* and *Morning Post* may be considered as the exponents of them. The only other duty required of them would have appeared to the disinterested inquirer to be the consuming of the greatest possible amount of stationery in the transaction of the least amount of business, concerning the most useless and inconceivable purposes. The Redundancy Office cost the British tax-payer from about eight to ten thousand pounds per annum, and its necessary duties might have been far better performed by one clerk at a hundred.

and even if this were not the case it would not be any reason why he should not attack an abuse. The sketch of the Redundancy is taken from the life, and the alteration of but a few letters would give its real name.

But the patronage of the Redundancy Office was one of the bulwarks of the Government; consequently, the Redundancy was one of the bulwarks of the nation, and as such the nation had every reason to be proud of it.

Mr. Chilliwn's upper lip rejoiced in a civil-service moustache—that is to say, a thin streak of blistered and blighted something; for the original hair which formed its groundwork was a kind of down of the palest possible straw-colour, and would have looked, in its natural state, as if he had been eating biscuits, and forgotten to wipe away the crumbs. But Mr. Chilliwn was emulous of a martial, not a civil-service, appearance, and employed a hair-dye, the components of which were sulphuretted hydrogen—to judge by the smell—and nitrate of silver—to judge by the colour. Accordingly Mr. Chilliwn's upper lip often displayed tell-tale patches and blotches of a deep burnt-sienna colour, variegated with purple, and Mr. Chilliwn was perpetually rub-

bing and irritating the skin with pumice-stone and chemicals for the removal of these stains, which smelt like the Thames at high water.

Mr. Chilliwn was assuredly the most unlucky and unhappy of youths in his horse exercise.

"Now, Mr. Chilliwn," would Mr. Cheeker remark, as his pupil approached one of the above-mentioned fences on a shambling old grey horse, "now, sir, stick yer knees in, and raise yer 'and—don't set doubled up like a stick of warm sealin'-wax. Straighten yerself up, sir! You raily must not crane so. There ye go again!"

And as sure as the grey rose at the fence, off went Mr. Chilliwn, sometimes on the fence, sometimes on one side, and sometimes the other of it.

"I never see anyone so fond of sordust in my life," Mr. Cheeker would say, as he whisked the particles from Mr. Chilliwn's coat, and assisted him to re-mount.

After a due course of pounding round Mr. Cheeker's establishment, and walloping over the obstacles that gentleman had set up, and several mysterious excursions into the country under Mr. Cheeker's superintendence, our friend Newton, feeling pretty comfortable and easy in his seat, thought he might venture to try his hand in the field, and announced his intention to Mr. Chilliwn in as many words. For a week he had been studying the meets forthcoming, and had finally resolved to hunt his first hunt with the Trumpshire. And when he announced his intention to Mr. Chilliwn, Mr. Chilliwn, burning with emulation, announced his intention of being "one in with him if he didn't mind." And Newton thought that if he was a muff, Mr. Chilliwn was worse, and would at any rate keep him in countenance, and so made no objection. "Tuesday, 10 o'clock, The Wooden Leg, Fiddlers' Green." And Tuesday, 10 o'clock, found Mr. Newton Dogvane and Mr.

Chilliwun arrayed in faultless and spotless pink, and mounted on a couple of Mr. Cheeker's hunters—for Mr. Cheeker kept a stud of hunters for hire, as well as a school—hunters to suit all complexions of aspiring sportsmen, at three guineas a day each. But we must go back a little. Newton and Mr. Chilliwun had accompanied their horses down by train the evening before to the Botchit station, and they had put up at Diddlington. After ordering their dinner, they walked round to the stables to prognosticate and talk about to-morrow with the ostlers, or anyone they could happen on.

“How far do you call it to the Wooden Leg at Fiddlers' Green, Joe?” All ostlers answer to the name of Joe; it's a sort of professional patronymic. And Joe, a little crooked-legged, bullet-headed ostler, with his hair cropped short at the temples, and a shiny face, made answer thus :

“How far to the Wooden Leg at Fiddlers'

Green, sir?"—Another peculiarity of ostlers, they always repeat a question before they answer it, and never give you a straightforward direct answer.—"How far to the Wooden Leg at Fiddlers' Green? Is-s-s—wo, oss—well, sir. Pard'n me, sir. Be you agoin' to the meet to-morrer?"

Newton nodded. "We are going to *hunt* to-morrow," put in Mr. Chilliwn, grandly. Joe paused to wipe his brow with the wisp of straw which he was rubbing a short-tempered, blood-looking bay horse down with.

"I thort so. Thinks I, them's two 'unters belongin' to two swells, as is good for Fiddlers' Green to-morrer. And I'll have to lead them osses over there in the mornin', and them swells 'll want a cart to drive over in. That's wot I thort."

"But what's the distance?—we didn't think of driving over; we thought of walking our horses over quietly," said Newton.

"Well—the distance—but there, you'll

never find it. It's—what's the distance to Fiddlers' Green, Jems?" And Jems, who was hissing at a carriage-wheel, mop in hand, of course repeated the question.

"Distance to Fiddlers' Green—oh, may be five mile, may be six."

"Ah, or seven," put in Joe.

"Or seven," added Jems, now having his cue. "Baint sarten taint eight. Sure it be, if ye goes the common way, and ye can't go no nightster way than that."

"Seven or eight miles! Why, they told us it wasn't more than three or four."

"You'll pard'n me, sir; I don't know how they be goin' to go to it then. Balloon, I reck'ns."

"Nor I neither," added Jems. "Why, there's up by the 'and post, and down by Shaw's Barn, and 'long Crowsbottom, and cross Cogglepot Common, &c. ; Is-s-s-s," and round went the wheel, and swash went the mop, and not another word did Jems say.

“ A crow med do it in vower mile and ’alf, or vive mile ; I can’t say ; leastways I ben’t a crow —is-s-s-s,” and not another word did Joe say.

One or two more remarks our friends made without eliciting a reply from either of the ostlers, who evidently knew the value of their conversation. A pot of beer, however, unsealed their tongues, and they volunteered all sorts of curious information about the line of country foxes always took from Fiddlers’ Green. The chalk pits, bullfinches, stone walls, grips, brooks, &c., which they talked about, were enough to alarm a raw hand, and to excite a smile in an old one. Joe and Jems were possessed of fertile imaginations, and they soon made it out, over the third pot of beer, to our friends, that if they could *live* out a day with the Trumpshire, they could *lead* with any pack in the kingdom—a very common weakness, with regard to their own pack, amongst the understrappers in any hunting neighbourhood.

The noble sportsmen dined and wined, and after dinner lighted their weeds. Mr. Chilliwn strolled round through the yard to the stables, again bent upon more information. After a few minutes' interval, Newton followed.

"Now, Joe, look here," said the voice of Mr. Chilliwn, as Newton approached the door by which they had been talking before dinner. The door was open, but it was between him and the parties in consultation. "Now, Joe, look here; I'm going to ask your advice. I'm not quite up in this." Newton paused, and leant against the gateway, which was within earshot. "Now, what should you advise?" continued Mr. Chilliwn.

"Regarding which, sir?" asked Joe. "What should I advise regarding which?" he repeated.

"Now, look here. There's half-a-crown; and now look here. What do you do on these occasions?"

"What do yer do on these occasions? Pard'n me, sir; wot occasions?"

"Well, you see, I don't understand about this hunting business. What do you do, now, when you first go out? What is the first thing? Of course, after the first go off, one's all right."

"Well sir, ye see they fust finds a fox, and then they kills him p'raps."

"Find him! I thought they always carried one out in a bag. I've heard so, I'm sure."

"That's in case they shouldn't find one," said Joe, with an audacious grin. "So fust the 'ounds is throw'd into cover."

"Thrown in! Good gracious! What, do they take them by the head and tail, and throw them right in amongst the bushes and brambles?"

"Well, not exactly that, unlesst they're werry back'ard in comin' for'ard; only it's called throwin' them in. Well, then, they finds a fox."

“And what do we do while the hounds are looking for him?” asked Mr. Chilliwn.

“Well, sir, you all waits outside round the kiver.” A bright idea here occurred to Joe, and he added boldly, “and you smells for him.”

“Smell for him!” said Mr. Chilliwn, in surprise.

“Sartain. Foxes is werry high scented—you can smell ’em most ony distance.”

“But what for?”

“So as to direct the ’ounds in case you *should* smell him, you know, sir; and if you *should* smell him, you know, sir, you’ll tellegrarf to the ’untsman, and tell him, and he’ll know wot to do.”

“And I suppose it’s a great card to smell him first, eh?”

“Esackly, it is. Well then, when the fox comes out, if you should happen to see him, you sings out, ‘Tally-ho,’ and then all you’ve got to do is to ride after him like greased lightnin’.”

"I don't seem to recollect about that smelling. Cheeker never said anything about it; but I suppose it's all right," said Mr. Chilliwun to himself.

"Yes, well (having made his mind up on the point)—well, then you sing out 'Tally ho,' and ride after him, eh?"

"Yes."

"And suppose I catch him, then I cut his tail off, don't I?—brush it's called, I believe."

A peculiar sound burst from Joe, which sounded like the commencement of a roar of laughter, but it died away in a powerful cough.

"Of course, if you catches him, you does; but, pard'n me, sir, I shouldn't advise you to catch him."

"Why not?"

"Why, ye see, foxes bites sometimes. I know'd a gent once as lost the seat of his leathers entirely through puttin' one in his pocket."

“Did he, though?”

“Ah! and I arn’t nowise sartain that that was the whole as he did lose. I knows he was wery tender in the saddle for a long time arter.”

“Ah! well, thank ye, Joe; look here now—there’s another half-crown.”

“Thank ye sir, and you’ll have Jems lead the ’osses over earlyish, so as to have ’em fresh at the meet in course. I’ll have the cart ready by eight o’clock.”

“Well, I think that would be best. I’ll ask my friend;” and he sauntered away, while Joe laid down in a loose box, and rolled over and over in the straw, kicking his heels with uproarious delight, in an ecstasy of cachinnation, and saying to himself, in fits and starts between each explosion, “Oh, darn it, it’s better nor a play this is. I have seen a green sprig or two in my time—but oh my Lord! I never see anything to ekal this ’ere—werdegrease is a fool to it, and

wernal werdure is nothink wotever. What wouldn't I give to see him a smelling round the kiver, and a tellegrarfing to old Bullyoaks! or tryin' all he knows to ketch the fox. I must lead them 'osses myself somehows, that's sartain. Oh dear! oh dear! Oh, my sides! wot a game it is! Ha! ha! oh dear, oh dear! They'll never believe it when I tell 'em all in-doors."

Newton resolved to ask no questions, but quietly to watch what others did, and do as they did. A wise resolve, upon the whole—but Mr. Chilliwun came forth grand and mysterious, bursting with the importance of suddenly-acquired knowledge, and during the remainder of the evening he assumed quite a high tone upon hunting matters over his companion; and Newton thought that, had he been good natured, and shown a disposition to share his *information*, he would have told him where he thought he had

been humbugged; but as he did not do so, but kept it to himself, he thought it would be best for pride to have its fall in its own way.

CHAPTER III.

MR. CHILLIWUN AND THE READER ARE INTRODUCED
TO A NICE CLIQUE.

AFTER Mr.Chilliwun's visit to the stables, he cast about him for some species of amusement. What was to be done with the evening? They had finished the bottle of port, which was not so bad as it might have been, and that is the best that could be said of it. They walked round the village—it was little better than a village—looked over the little stone bridge into the stream, now swollen with melted snows, and speculated on the likeliest places where trout would be induced to rise, under this spreading willow, or that

grey old pollard, or by yonder tufted bank, when spring should once more warm the waters and render them instinct with life. Turning about, they came round through the church-yard, and gazed at the old church tower, so still and silent in the moonlight, while the night breeze rustled through the aged yew, and made it appear as if it were whispering to the tower of what those two had seen between them in times long past; then our friends read the inscriptions on the tombstones, until, once more striking through the village, they reached their inn again, on entering which, they heard the sound of billiard-balls.

“I say, Dogvane, d’ye hear that? There’s a billiard-table here.”

At that moment the door of the billiard-room opened, and a servant with a tray of glasses came from it, and likewise the words, “red a life, blue’s the nearest ball, and green’s yer player.”

“ And a lot of yokels playing pool, actually,” continued Mr. Chilliwn. “ I say, Dogvane, look here, I say, let’s go and walk into the muffs, and put the double on the countrymen.”

“ Thank you, no ; I don’t care about it. Besides, the table’s certain to be a wretch, and I’ve got a letter to write. I shall have a glass of brandy and soda-water, another cigar, and then to bed. You know we must be up tolerably early,” said Newton.

“ Well, *I’ll* go then,” and Mr. Chilliwn turned towards the door.

“ Take care they don’t put the double, as you call it, on *you*.”

“ D’ye think I’ve played at Stebbing’s to come down into the country and be picked up ?” I say now, come,” said Mr. Chilliwn, remonstrating at the absurdity of such a supposition.

“ Well, you know best,” answered Newton, entering their own apartment, and ringing for

lights and stationery; while the devoted Chilliwun, confident in his strength, entered the billiard-room.

There were five or six gentlemen in the room, smoking, drinking, and playing pool. Mr. Chilliwun took a seat, ordered something to drink, and smoked silently. The pool came to an end.

“Would you like to take a ball, sir?” asked the marker of Mr. Chilliwun.

“I’m sure I’ll take one with pleasure, if the gentlemen have no objection,” said Mr. Chilliwun.

The gentlemen had no objection, and Mr. Chilliwun took the red one with pleasure, and playing off very softly at the white, was astonished to find that his red ball diverged painfully from a straight line as it approached the white, and missed it by about two inches.

“Dear me,” said Mr. Chilliwun, looking at the point of his cue, as if the fault lay there.

“I think that’s what we call a miss, my dear friend,” said the owner of the white ball. “We pay a shilling for that, my dear friend. Thank you. I am afraid you’ll find that red ball a little untrue—not quite round; I think you’ll find it necessary, very necessary, my dear friend, to hit ’em harder.”

The gentleman who gave this bit of advice was a powerful-looking man, between forty and fifty, with a remarkable beard, which hung down on his bosom in bushy confusion. He was addressed by the others as Saunter. The table was just what Newton had described it—a wretch—a wooden abomination with stuffed cushions, that would have afforded capital and salutary exercise to any one troubled with rheumatism, who had made a bet that he would drive the ball three times over the cloth—small balls and capacious pockets, with severe and peculiar *runs* to all of them; for instance, Chilliwn lost his second life in this way. His player, a rufous

gentleman, whose name was apparently Pegs, and who affected a peculiar style of costume, amidst which a white silk scarf, curiously tied, with a considerable pin in it, was conspicuous, lay under the left-hand cushion, within baulk, that is, his ball did. Mr. Chilliwn had played on a double, and missed it, but left his own ball under the same cushion, about a foot from the middle pocket.

"Tolerably safe," said Mr. Chilliwn. And in a general way, anyone would think that a ball in that position was so.

"Half-a-crown he pots you, my dear friend," said Mr. Saunter.

"Nonsense," said Mr. Chilliwn.

"I'll double it, if you like," quoth Saunter.

"Why, it's robbing you. However, done, if you like."

"We'll all forgive you if you rob old Saunter, sir," said a very neat, quiet, gentlemanly-looking little man, who looked as if he had something to do with horses; "but I'm afraid

he's a great deal more likely to rob you; for the fact is, *we've* all been trying to rob *him* for years; but it never seems to come off properly, does it, Saunter?"

There was a roar of laughter at this.

It ended, and Mr. Pegs, levelling his cue, struck his own ball very softly. Mr. Chilli-wun's ball received the desired impetus, rolled, or rather crawled, over the intervening foot, and, getting into some unseen current, dropped into the middle pocket, to Mr. Chilli-wun's immense astonishment. Forthwith he stood and delivered again to Mr. Saunter, who, answering the question which had been put to him just before the stroke, said:—

"Well, my dear friend, I can't complain, though you do run me very hard at times."

"Not half so hard as you were run at Jerrold's Cross, Saunter."

"How was that, Pegs? let's hear it," said one or two of the company.

"Well, you see," said Mr. Pegs, clearing

his voice, "there's some devilish good shooting at Jerrold's Cross, belonging to old Sir Thomas Overcharge; and one day Overcharge, who preserves very strictly, was out with a distinguished party, shooting. Ponderous swells they were, and Overcharge, of course, desired to do something to be talked of; but somehow the sport wasn't quite as good as he expected. All of a sudden, just as they had worked through a small cover, Overcharge pulls up. 'Hallo! what's that?' he says; 'it sounded like a gun.' 'Very like a gun,' said one of the party. 'Can't be,' said the head keeper; 'that's all our land that way.' Just at that minute, bang went another barrel. 'No mistake about that,' said the friend. Overcharge turned to the head keeper in a deuce of a rage. 'What d'ye call that, sir? What d'ye call that?' 'Sounds like a gun,' said the keeper, looking puzzled. 'Sounds like a gun, sir!' roared Overcharge; 'why, it is a gun, you idiot. By ——, it's somebody shoot-

ing Prickle copse.' Bang, bang went the gun again, and away went Overcharge, full split, with the whole field at his tail, dogs, keepers and all, in the direction of the gun. Bang, bang. Overcharge was furious. Didn't he swear? You know he can swear when he likes. Well, on they went, pulling foot up the hill for the copse at a deuce of a pace. Every now and then, off went the gun; the stranger, whoever he was, was having no end of good shooting, regularly skinning the cover; and at every shot Overcharge started and bolted ahead, as if the d—l had kicked him. Well, they got into the copse, and still they couldn't come up with the audacious stranger; but they heard his bang, bang, every two or three minutes, always about a quarter of a mile ahead. The stranger was working the copse through towards the park-wall with the utmost regularity, and poor old Overcharge was pretty nearly frantic. Bang, bang, bang, bang. The field, with Overcharge leading,

went stumbling away over roots and stubbs, pretty nigh blown by this time, you may be sure. At last, just as they were getting towards the thin of the copse, they heard a last right-and-lefter, and in a few minutes they got out; and there, about two hundred yards from them, just mounting the park-wall, they saw a man with a gun, and with his pockets frightfully distended. 'Run round, run round, you &c. &c. &c.,' shouted Overcharge, 'or the infernal &c. &c. &c. will get away, after all.' 'Blowed if I can run another step,' said the keeper. 'Nor I.' 'Nor I,' said all the rest of the field. Every man jack of 'em was regularly dead beat; and, before any of 'em could get their wind, the poacher was over, and up into a light cart, which stood waiting for him, with a remarkably fast-trotting cob in it. Turning round in the cart, and displaying a beard very like *Saunter's*, he waved his hand to them as a last adieu, and in two or three minutes was clean out of sight. But the best

of the joke was, that a very handsome spaniel was missing after they came to look about them; he'd been foremost in the field, and, coming up with the stranger while the shooters were yet in the copse, it seemed such a pity that such a handsome-looking beast should be astray and without a master, that the poacher, *with the beard like Saunter's*, actually took compassion on him, and, whipping him up, dropped him into his pocket along with the pheasants. Very handsome dog he was too, and fetched a deal of money, I've heard, eh; Saunter?"

"I've heard so, my friend, I've heard so," said Saunter, coolly.

More laughter followed this neat little episode. It's astonishing how they appeared to relish it.

The transaction was pronounced an "artful do," and Mr. Saunter "a regular bite." Had the transaction been called a felony, and Mr. Saunter a thief, doubtless the whole circle

would have been very much shocked. Indeed, it would have been considered very bad manners to use such language. Alas! when a people begins to invent feather-bed names for its crimes, and becomes ashamed of its own language, it is a sign that all moral feeling and principle is gone from it; and, as total corruption cannot long stand by itself, and never has long stood by itself, the speedy downfall of that nation may be confidently predicted. Such thoughts, however, troubled the mind of no one present at the scene we are describing. The game continued.

Being a tolerably fair player, as soon as he got a little accustomed to the table, Mr. Chilliwn held his own pretty well—that is, he did not lose much. . Presently, as he was turning to chalk his cue, after receiving for a couple of lives he had taken, Mr. Pegs approached the mantel-piece, and taking up a card, as if by accident, looked over it, and

read aloud the name and address—"Mrs. Cleverly, Dyer, No. 19, Wingrove-street," &c. A very meaning smile ran round the room, and the greater part of the gentlemen glanced carelessly at Mr. Chilliwn, as if they expected some fun.

"Who's Mrs. Cleverley, Tom?" asked Pegs. "Some flame of yours, eh?"

"Don't know, sir," answered Tom. "Some 'un left the card by haccident, I s'pose."

"Dyer, eh! Gad, I don't think the word's spelt right. Dyer—Dyer?" and Mr. Pegs appeared to consider.

"Let me see, my dear friend," said Mr. Saunter, taking the card and looking at it. "Dyer—d-y-e-r; yes, that's all right, my dear friend;" and he returned it.

"Hanged if I think it is, though. I'm sure it isn't. Let me see; nonsense. I'll bet a sovereign it's spelt wrong."

The rest of the company here crowded round, examining the card with apparent

interest. Some took one side, some the other. Amongst the rest, Mr. Chilliwn looked at it.

"Why, of course it's right," said Mr. Chilliwn, authoritatively. "Who ever saw it spelt any how else? That's right enough."

"I say it's wrong," repeated Pegs. "I'll bet five pound it's wrong; at least, that's not the way we used to spell it."

"We spelt it so at Eton," said Mr. Chilliwn, loftily.

"We didn't spell it so at Harrow," said Pegs.

"Eton versus Harrow. You're wrong, Pegs, my dear friend. My dear friend, he's wrong," said Saunter, turning to Chilliwn.

"Of course he is," said Chilliwn.

"Never mind," said Mr. Pegs, with apparent doggedness. "If I'm wrong, I suppose I can pay; but I'll lay five pound or ten pound I'm not. I'm certain—confident I'm not. It isn't likely we should all be wrong."

"Well," said Mr. Chilliwun, "you're very foolish to offer such a bet."

"Never mind," said Pegs, doggedly, "five pound I'll lay."

"I don't want to win your money."

"Never mind. I'm not afraid to bet if you aint."

"Oh, I'm not afraid," said Chilliwun, proudly. "I'll bet you five pound, or fifty, for that matter." The bet of five was made forthwith.

"Go down and ask if they've got a dictionary, Tom," said Mr. Saunter, doubtfully.

"I dare say they haven't." Somehow, they had a dictionary, and very quickly produced it."

"I bet on a certainty. You can draw if you like you know," said Mr. Pegs. Mr. Chilliwun thought this looked a little like funking; so he became all the more eager.

"So do I bet on a certainty, and I won't draw," he answered.

The dictionary was brought, and, curiously enough, it open'd at the very page. "Let's see," said Mr. Saunter, "D-y, dy—dy—dy—no such word at all," he said, in *almost perfect* amazement.

"No?" said Mr. Chilliwn, turning pale. "Well, then, it can't be decided."

"I knew I was right," said Mr. Pegs, catching the book. "Here, let's have a look, Saunter. D-y, dy—sure enough not here. Now I can't help thinking it's spelt with an i"—astonishing how easily that page was found, too. "Di-i, di—di—dier, here you are. Dier, one who, &c., &c. There it is, you see. I thought I couldn't be wrong."

And all his opponents were "*Quite amazed*. Really!" Who'd have thought it? Mr. Chilliwn wouldn't, at any rate. He appeared utterly and stupidly astonished. He looked at the word again and again. There it was. He turned to D-y, there it wasn't; so he pulled a five pound note slowly out of his

case, and handed it over to Mr. Pegs, who crumpled it up, and thrust it into his breeches pocket, as if it were the bill of a play; and Mr. Chilliwn had the satisfaction of finding out some time afterwards—for he was ashamed to tell Newton of it the next day—that he'd been done brown without even the satisfaction of knowing it. Let not Mr. Chilliwn be too much condemned for his softness in this instance; he was no worse than are the gentlemen who *will* lose their money at thimblerrigging, and who will, in spite of all warning, bet with gentlemanly strangers, who carry three bent cards in their hats whenever they travel by railway, and who delude their victims by a game which may be aptly designated three-card lose. The game went on with little variation, Chilliwn sometimes losing and sometimes winning; he was standing with his back to the neat little gentleman we have referred to, and another of the company, a stout man; and whilst in that

position he overheard another anecdote highly creditable to Mr. Saunter's talents. It was very characteristic, so we give it.

"By the way, how did the match go off?" asked the stout gentleman.

"Oh!" said the neat little man; "Saunter realised of course."

"But not *all* the stakes?"

"Every farthing."

"But I thought he asked Chesham to stand him halves."

"That was only in case *he lost*."

"But how was it?"

"Well, it was tolerably neatly done. He calls at Chesham's one day, and says, 'I'm going to shoot Higgins a match; will you go halves?' 'You can beat him easily enough,' says Chesham. 'Of course I can,' said Saunter; 'but I don't care to stand all the stakes.' 'What are they?' asked Chesham. 'Oh! only fifty, my dear friend.' 'I'm with you, then,' says Chesham. 'It's a bargain.'

It wasn't to come off for a few days, and Chesham was obliged to go away, and the match was shot whilst he was absent. On his way back he calls at Saunter's and says, 'Well, how did it go off? How many did you beat him by? So old Saunter pulls a deuce of a long face, and begins in the most miserable tone—'Now, my dear friend, don't be angry.' 'Why,' says Chesham, 'you never were such a confounded old muff as to let him beat *you*?' 'My dear friend, you know one can't always win.' 'Oh, hang it!' says Chesham, 'I thought it was a certainty.' 'So did I,' says Saunter. There was a bit of a silence, and then Chesham says, 'I suppose there's nothing for it, then, but to pay one's money. Let's see, I have to give you five-and-twenty;' and he pulls out his note-case—honourable fellow, Chesham. But somehow, old Saunter didn't seem altogether pleased at this, for he looked puzzled; however, presently he looks up with a sort of grin, and

Chesham knew in a minute he was done.

“ ‘Well, you see, my dear friend,’ says Saunter, very affectionately—you know how affectionate he always is when he is going to do you—”

“Blessed old boa constrictor,” said the auditor.

“He is that,” said the neat man :—

“ ‘My dear friend,’ he says, ‘the fact is, I didn’t lose it—I won it.’

“ ‘Oh!’ says Chesham, putting up his notes, ‘then you have to give *me* five-and-twenty.’

“ ‘Well—no. You see, my *dear* friend,’ says Saunter, more affectionately than ever, ‘the fact is—’ and Chesham knew that there was a lie coming when Saunter talked about *facts*—‘the fact is, that on the field we altered the charge from 6 to 8 drachms of powder, and from 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. of shot to 2 oz. ; so, as I didn’t know on the field whether you’d stand to it, as the conditions were altered, why I—’

“ ‘ Conditions be hanged !’ says Chesham ;
 ‘ I never heard a word of the conditions
 from first to last. What were conditions
 to me ? I knew you could beat him on any
 conditions.’

“ ‘ Ah ! now, my dear friend. Did you
 really ? Well now, if I’d only known that,’
 says the old hypocrite.

“ ‘ There, that’ll do ; don’t let’s have any
 more of that,’ says Chesham.

“ ‘ Well, my dear friend, as you weren’t
there to say you’d stand to it, and the con-
 ditions were altered, I could not risk standing
 it all myself, so I was obliged to let our dear
 John stand in half instead of you. I’m very
 sorry ; and the *fact* is, I’m truly grieved,
 my dear friend ; but you see—’

“ However, Chesham saw that he was done,
 and didn’t stop to be condoled with.”

“ But,” said the listener, as the anecdote
 came to an end, “ what was the object
 of his saying that he’d lost, in the first place ?”

“ Why, don’t you see? he was in hopes Chesham would shirk paying, and repudiate, and swear there was a do in it—don’t you see? And then he’d have turned round, and said, ‘ Well, as you wouldn’t stand to it, and refuse to pay me, there’s no earthly reason why I should pay you.’ Don’t you see?”

“ I see ; and so when Chesham offered to stump, it was a regular floorer.”

“ Of course it was ; anything like straightforward dealing is the greatest floorer you can administer to the old humbug. But old Saunter’s not the sort of weasel to be caught napping ; and he had another yarn ready in a twinkling. The charge had been altered to accommodate Higgins on the ground, and they put on an extra 10% in consequence. So he was down on him on that tack when the other wouldn’t do. Any how, ‘ parting is no game of Saunter’s.”

“ Not a bit of it ;” and Mr. Chilliwun,

having just made a hazard that won him the whole pool, pocketed the stakes with an air of much satisfaction and grandeur.

At length an adjournment to broiled bones and Welsh rabbits, &c., was proposed. Sundry drinkables were put out of sight, and a bowl of potent bishop was prepared, of which all partook freely. A little game of cards was hinted at, and then proposed, "just to pass an hour, you know." And Mr. Chilliwn, being not a little excited by the bishop and the et-ceteras which he had disposed of since dinner-time, and utterly unwarned by all that he had seen and heard, was of course, as he expressed it, "game for anything." So they had "a little knock in at Vingt-un," in the course of which another of Mr. Chilliwn's 5*l* notes vanished, with three or four loose sovereigns to keep it company; and so ended the evening.

CHAPTER IV.

A SOUTHERLY WIND AND A CLOUDY SKY.

“HOT water, sir? soda water, sir? Yes sir. I have called t’other gentleman, sir, and he’s down, and is a walkin’ in the garding a waiting breakfast, sir. Directly, sir.” And away went Boots in search of soda-water for Mr. Chilliwn. Mr. Chilliwn looked lazily out of window. Rosy his eye and pale his cheek. Mr. Chilliwn had been *put* to bed the night before. He saw Newton strolling round a small enclosure of grass plot, bordered by chrysanthemums of all colours, and thick evergreens; in one corner of it was a capacious smoking-arbour; beyond it was the kitchen

garden ; Newton was already in full pink, with a light top-coat over all ; but he had not yet decorated his calves with the bran new tops, and his bucks were unsoiled.

“Hallo, old fellow ! Look alive!”—he called out as he saw the pallid countenance of Mr. Chilliun first surveying him through the window—“How are you this morning?”

“Oh ! all right—all right. Least trifle of a headache. Wish I hadn’t eaten that confounded curry at dinner.”

“Ah ! I told you that *port* wasn’t to be trusted. Regular poison. Decoction of sloes and elder-berries, logwood and liquorice.”

“Oh ! execrable, of course ; one doesn’t expect anything else, so one isn’t deceived ; but it wasn’t the wine” (when ever was it?)

“No ; it was that beastly curry ; and I don’t think Welsh-rabbits and devilled goose-back good things for supper. I’ve had horrible nightmares.”

“No, especially when you combine them

with unlimited bishop and gin-punch. I'm afraid those fellows you got into company with made a set at you."

"Pooh! not they. Let 'm. I could see 'm all under the table if I liked; but I took nothing—nothing at all." (Who ever does take anything? We never knew anyone who did, the next morning; and yet a good deal of one sort of liquor and another may have vanished the night before. We suppose, however, that heated rooms, gas, &c., cause an unusual degree of evaporation.) "How do the horses look this morning?"

"Oh! Trumpeter's as fresh as a four-year-old, and the Dean don't look amiss. I started them about half an hour since, with Joe, and I've ordered breakfast; so pull yourself together as quick as you can, or we shall be late." And Newton disappeared, while Mr. Chilliwn continued his toilette.

Mr. Chilliwn, much perplexed by his tops, slowly descended, swaggering. Kidneys, chops,

bacon, eggs, grills, toasts, teas, coffees, and p'l ales, with a little liqueur-glass of pale brandy and a plate of gingerbread-nuts—they walked into one, played with another, trifled with another, and pocketed the last at the waiter's instigation; and, having lighted the preliminary weed, stepped into the dogcart, amidst an admiring and critical crowd.

"Ah, take his CLOTHES off, ossla," said Mr. Chilliwn, seizing the reins.

"My heye! Look at 'is spurs," quoth a promising young gutter-bird.

"Braw cockies; braw cockies," said old "Sondie Mac Screw," who kept the post-office.

"Isn't it dhrinkin' yer health we'll be this could mornin', Capun, darlin'?" cried Tim Fogarthy, the wooden-legged, wall-eyed beggar, who was the licensed jester of the place.

"Go to blazes, and get out of the way," answered Mr. Chilliwn.

"Be the powres, Sandey man, av its talking

av cocks ye was, in relashins to the jontlemen, who knows better than Tim Fogarthy that's his honour's the great ginger pile?"—an allusion to Mr. C.'s drab Siphonia and sandy hair and whiskers—"and a rare bird he is entirely—Cock-a-doodle-d-o-o-o," crowed Tim, in excellent imitation, at which the crowd were in ecstasies, and little boys stood on their heads on the pavement to express delight at the victory gained by their favourite over "the swell," as Mr. Chilliwn drove off, scowling magnificent disdain on all around.

Mr. Chilliwn had been wont to boast of his driving, and hinted darkly and mysteriously at tandems. However, the "old hoss was quiet, and know'd the road," as Jems said, after instructing them about it, and off they started, Mr. Chilliwn squaring his elbows and topping his whip in very grand style—not four, but fourteen-in-hand style, at the very least; and consequently they only had one upset during the whole journey,

and that was when Mr. Chilliwn turned his head to look after a well-looking country wench. The horse, blind on the near side, took the wheel of the cart up a bank, and upset it, Mr. Chilliwn pitching out on the horse's back, and Newton on top of him. The horse was evidently accustomed to this sort of thing, for he lay quite still, while a labourer or two who chanced to be at hand came up and unharnessed him. No damage was done beyond a few scratches; so, after a short delay, they got to rights, and Newton, who did not feel inclined to trust his neck again to Mr. Chilliwn's skill, took the reins himself, and in due time they reached Fiddlers' Green. There was no need to ask where the Wooden Leg was. The crowd of men and horses around it spoke plain enough. Our sportsmen left the cart and betook themselves to their horses, which they found awaiting them under Joe's superintendence.

(N.B.) The seven or eight miles had seemed

very very short ones, not much better than half-miles in fact.)

“ A southerly wind and a cloudy sky,” hummed Newton.

“ Gad, sir, you’re just right there, for it’s a splendid morning,” said a tall, dark-whiskered gentleman on a powerful iron-grey, that looked like lasting.

Newton turned his head. It was the Honourable Carysford.

“ Why, Mr. Dogvane, I thought you never hunted. Glad to find myself deceived.”

Newton would have said that it was the first time, but he could hardly make up his mouth to it ; so he merely murmured something about being partial to it, &c. At this moment a lady in a light phæton, drawn by two beautiful little Arab ponies, came dashing up. She nodded to Carysford ; as she passed, Newton caught a glimpse of her countenance. He had seen it before ; who could she be ? Suddenly he remembered that

it was the same lady he had seen in the Park with Ned. Noticing his look, Carysford remarked, carelessly :—

“ Very pretty, isn’t she ? ”

“ Indeed, she’s lovely,” answered Newton.

“ Who is she ? ”

“ Oh ! the Spelthorne—Mrs. Spelthorne—widow of Jack Spelthorne, who died in India. Handsomest woman in town, and has tin unlimited, I’m told. All the men are after her.”

“ Indeed ! I should like to know her.”

Newton thought if he could get introduced to her, he could then find out what his friend Ned was about.

“ Ah ! I’ll introduce you some day,” said Carysford, looking over Newton’s horse. “ Your cover-hack, I suppose. Looks like an old hunter.”

Newton hardly knew what to say. He did not know what a cover-hack was exactly, so he thought a nod would express all that

was necessary. Now, Mr. Carysford knew well enough it was not Newton's cover-hack, because he saw him, two minutes before he spoke to him, drive up in the cart, and watched him make the exchange. He knew him directly, for Mr. Carysford had the faculty of never forgetting any one at all likely to be in any way serviceable to him, and he had resolved to sell Newton a horse. So the allusion to the cover-hack was intended to cut two ways—first, as a sort of covert flattery, in gifting him with a cover-hack ; and, secondly, in making him ashamed of the horse he rode, by taking it as a sort of certainty not disputable, “ that he didn't mean to hunt upon ‘ that screw.’ ”

“ What's your weight ? ” continued Mr. Carysford ; “ I suppose you'd ride about ten stone ten. . . What a weight you'd be for my black mare, Countess. She'd exactly suit you—exactly. I wish you'd come down and look at her ; I don't mind showing her to *you*,

and if you fancy her you shall put your own price on her, for you ought to have her ; she's cut out for you—jet black—not a white hair about her. She's altogether too light for me, as I ride about thirteen stone. But, with you on her back, there's nothing she couldn't do. You needn't have her, you know, if you don't fancy her, but you will fancy her. I'll thank you for a light ;” and the Hon. Carysford, who lost a good deal of his drawl when horse-dealing, lighted his cigar from Newton's. “ Ah ! I see you can't keep your eyes from the pony-chaise. She certainly is a beautiful creature—very often drives down to see the hounds throw off—you never saw her following them, I suppose ? No—ah ! she *can* ride—by Jove, she's the only woman I know that can. I'll tell you what I'll do, as you admire her so ; I have to make a call at her house, and I think I shall look in on—let me see ; to-day's Tuesday—yes, on Thursday—I shall call there on Thursday, and if you will come

to me on Thursday morning, say about two, we can look at the mare, and I'll take you there afterwards and introduce you. But take care of yourself; you'll have to fight half London if you fall in love with her. Is it an engagement?"

Newton gladly jumped at the offer, and writing his address on a card, Carysford handed it to Newton, and with a slight nod turned away.

"Bagged, I think," thought Carysford, as he rode off.

Newton felt much flattered at the Hon. Carysford's notice; and indeed, one or two other men, who had passed him with a contemptuous glance at the screw he rode, seemed inclined to be a trifle civil to him when they saw them in conversation. He need not have felt flattered, however. The Hon. Carysford knew well the value of his attention and acquaintance—no one better. He was one of a class. He lived and hunted on his rank.

He would sell a horse or a friend with equal pleasure. He had at once marked down Newton for a deal of which we need not say he wasn't to get the best. The Hon. Carysford was always "standing in a little" for various little matters. Did an aspiring party desire to kiss his sovereign's hand, and had no one to present him, Carysford could and would do it for him, provided he "stood in a little." Did a Mr. So-and-So want to be introduced and married to an Hon Miss So-and-So, or *vice versâ*, Carysford was your man, provided he "stood in a little." Did any one want a ticket for Lady Palmsoap's ball, you might have Carysford's own, provided you allowed him to "stand in a little." And lastly, did you want anything in the Government way, provided you were willing to do something very handsome for Government, and bind yourself body and soul to it for ever, and allowed "him, the Hon. Carysford to stand in a little, hang me if he couldn't

work it for you, and so that was all about it." Society, as it is called, could not thrust him from its bosom, because really the only difference between them was that perhaps it was better off than he was in a pecuniary sense, not that it was a whit more virtuous or better principled ; besides, he was related to half a dozen lofty families, who have played various parts in our history, most of whom by this time were on a par with himself in point of honesty and morality. There he was, ready to do theirs, yours, his own, or anybody's dirty work, if he only "stood in a little." Always "round a corner" as one might say, bobbing about from place to place, to get out of this one's way, or to avoid the other—one day bussing it, another day cabbing it, now railing it, and now four-in-handing it, but seldom or never twice together in the same day. Sometimes in Belgravia, when anyone would have him ; and sometimes on Eel-pie Island, maintaining a

strict blockade, and keeping a perpetual and bright look-out—walking into Surrey if the sheriff of Middlesex made his appearance, and taking a promenade in Middlesex when the sheriff of Surrey was reported to be in sight; and always in possession of a stud of horses in various parts of the country, and always hunting his three days a week. It was a curious kind of life—one long game of hide and seek, with a general suspicion of strangers, and a practical knowledge of Insolvent Courts and Bankruptcy Commissioners. Having been in early life called to the bar, he became acquainted with “The Bench,” and the rules thereof, in the course of his studies of that portion of the law which affects getting into debt and getting out of it again without paying. His was one life in a system of life which is slowly devouring us, and which enlists more and more admirers and followers every year; a system which fills our Government at home, and likewise our foreign em-

bassies and consulships, with a pack of miserable incapables, who oftentimes must be got out of the country somehow, for fear of their coming to a bad end in it—a system which is breaking the pride of England, makes her hated by all foreign nations, and is wrecking her name and fame as carelessly as it has previously, through and in the persons of each of its followers and admirers, wrecked their own.

But we are getting away from Hangback Gorse, towards which the cavalcade of sportsmen and dogs were now hastening. Hangback Gorse was a thin plantation, with a bottom of furze here and there in patches—abounding with rabbits, there being a warren handy. There were some tallish hedges round some parts of the cover. Knots of sportsmen were chatting, smoking, passing the “Tea-canister,” and criticising horses, dogs, or general appearances. Most of them were well known to one another.

“Hallo! what have we got here?” asked

a natty little man, with a beaming countenance, and somewhat inclining to "bong pong"—as we once heard the word *embon-point* rendered. "What *have* we here?" Newton and his friend rode slowly by.

"Gus, my dear, I saw you talking to one of them. What *are* they on?"

"Oh! two old screws of Cheeker's. I know them well enough. Seen 'em hundreds of times."

"And who are the 'ingenuous puer's' who have bestowed the priceless gift of their confidence on a Cheeker?"

"How should I know! I met the tallest one at the Hounslow mess some time since. The other I fancy I have seen somewhere, in some office or other; I hardly know."

"Why don't you take pity on them, Gus, and re-mount them?"

"I mean to, but—steady—steady." The last word or two was addressed to his horse, as the musical "Yoi over" from old Tom

Crafty—Bullyoaks being, of course, only a soubriquet—sent the hounds almost *en masse* into the cover.

Old Tom was a huntsman of the old school, thoroughly up in every department of the science he practised, and as much addicted to hard language as he was to hard riding, and, in truth, to hard living in a general way. Woe betide the unlucky individual who chanced to incur his indignation !

And now every ear was bent towards the cover, and every eye scanned curiously the cover side. The horses stood with ears almost touching in their anxiety to catch the first whimper, all eagerness and impatience to be off. Newton sat quietly, some fifteen or twenty yards behind the Hon. Carysford, watching his motions, and ready to do, if possible, as he did. Mr. Chilliwn, however, scorned to do as any one did; but went skirting along the cover-side, in spite of the constant strong hints to keep quiet which he

received. On he went with his nose towards the cover, vainly striving to smell out the fox; and thus he passed from point to point, until a tall hedge, running from the cover at right angles, stopped his further progress.

Now, it so happened, that the farmer to whom the adjoining field belonged, had been throwing down a heap or two of manure the day before, and the wind setting thence brought the smell straight to Mr. Chilliwn's nose.

"Sniff, sniff, sniff. Ah! very strong indeed. Yes, here he is, no doubt," and forthwith he commenced telegraphing and gesticulating to one of the whips, who was just entering the cover, having stopped half a moment to exchange a word with a knot of gentlemen.

"What is that gentleman doing? Why, I declare, Gus, it's one of your friends. What does he mean?" (*Gesticulations growing violent.*) "What does he want? What on

earth is he up to?" (*Gesticulations and telegraphing more and more violent with every fresh puff.*) "What the deuce game do you call that? What's he doing with his nose? Has anything bitten him? Let's go and see. There's some fun here;" and riding slowly along, they approached within about twenty yards of Mr. Chilliwn, when that gentleman, rising in his stirrups with excitement, with glaring eye and wild hair, said in a loud, hoarse, stage whisper, as he pointed to the hedge:—

"Here he is; *I* can smell him." That there was a burst of suppressed laughter at this, at which Mr. Chilliwn first looked blank, then surprised, and then indignant, it is needless to say. Great would have been the chaff, but a faint whimper on the other side of the cover which stopped every mouth. They rode quietly but quickly back to their station, Mr. Chilliwn following, but slowly. Scarcely had they reached it when a deep

sonorous challenge came echoing through the cover :—

“Hoick to Reindeer!—Hoick to Reindeer! Twang, twang,” and old Tom went bustling through the cover, bringing together the hounds rapidly. The challenge was repeated. There was no mistake about it. Another and another hound acknowledged the scent. Crash, tear, rush. Master Reynard was afoot, and no mistake. They had dragged up to him, and the hounds were bustling him closely, and hound after hound joined the cry, until one continued stream of melody made the cover ring and every heart quiver, as the men forced their hats tight down on their brows, threw away the stumps of their cigars, and drew a deep breath as they gathered up the reins and took a fresh grip.

“Now for it. I wonder where he’ll break.”

“What the &c., &c., is that booby-headed

varmint-sniffer doing there? Come back, you sir!" screamed Bob Seely, the whip, "come back, &c., &c., your carcass, come back!"

The hounds were making straight as an arrow for the point where Mr. Chilliwn was standing, every hound throwing tongue like half a dozen. Reynard evidently meant bolting there, for it was much too hot where he was.

"Who the &c., &c., would ever have thought, &c., &c., of his sticking hisself there? He'll head him back for sartin!" and a volley of oaths rolled from Bob Seely as he galloped up to the devoted Chilliwn. It was too late; for long before he could reach him, he saw that wretched individual make a sudden and frantic rush forward, with a loud shriek of Tally Ho! in a cracked voice, and a variety of keys, assuredly the most discordant yell that ever unfortunate fox was greeted with, the instant he showed his nose

out of cover. Another terrific oath burst from Bob Seely as he charged slap at the hapless Chilliwn, and rolled him, horse and all, over and over into the ditch, and took the lot in his stride as he sprung into the cover. But it was too late; a confused uproar and muttered oaths from angry lips succeeded the late burst of music. There was no mistake about it. There he was, dead, in all his pride and beauty—Reynard was chopped. It is perfectly impossible to describe the feeling of the field, and it would be useless to dwell upon the rage of Tom Crafty and Bob Seely, because we really could not shock our readers' ears with a tenth part of what was said. That Mr. Chilliwn escaped with no worse punishment must be attributed to his being stunned in the ditch. In the midst of all this, clear and distinct from the further end of the cover, came ringing up, "Tally-Ho-o-o-o—gone away!" Another fox! never! Gad! what luck! Luck? We should rather

think it was ; and, doubtless, as much so for the reader as for the author. We might describe that which would have taken place in ninety cases out of a hundred—the growls of the field at a day thus spoiled—“ Cut to pieces, murdered, sir ! ” We might have told of drawing one or two more covers as blank as the sportsmen’s faces, and a cheerless ride home, without the least symptom of a run. No doubt this would have been the state of affairs but too often ; but it must be borne in mind that such a tame occurrence would not be worth describing ; or, if described at all, might, and probably would, be done somewhat in the way in which such a day would be entered in a sportsman’s diary. Thus :—“ Tuesday, 23rd. Lovely morning as ever came out of the heavens ; ‘ southerly wind and a cloudy sky.’ Drew Hangback Gorse ; found directly. Fox headed back into cover by a fool—an infernal idiot on

a flea-bitten screw—chopped of course. Drew Cowl Dean and Brambledrag—both blank. Home, tired, wet, and disgusted. Don't think I shall hunt again this season, particularly if I see 'a fool i' the forest.' N.B. All muffs should be held in a string, like bad retrievers—confound them."

We once knew a gentleman who was rather celebrated for toughish yarns, and when taken to task he always replied, "What would be the use of telling you so and so, if it *wasn't* rather unusual?"

On reaching the spot whence the tally-ho proceeded, they found a rustic—not the sort of rustic *Punch* invariably depicts—a something in a smock-frock, with chops like those of a prize-pig; we venture to say that that style of labourer is decidedly a *lusus naturæ*, and although it may suit the manufacturing and commercial interest to portray a species of bacon-fed monster as a rustic labourer, we can only say, after having resided much in the

country, and in many parts of it, that we have not many times realised this picture; and although there are, doubtless, men who have such a tendency to fatness that they will get fat upon the hardest bodily labour and nine or ten shillings a week, they are very few and very far between. Arriving at the other side of the cover, our sportsmen found a little withered fellow, in a high-dried state of preservation, who did not look as if there were a drop of perspiration left in his body; very red in the face, however, was he, with shouting and gesticulating, as he pointed in an excited state up a long hedgerow.

“Be so good as to 'old 'ard one moment, gentlemen,” said Old Tom. “Now then, old 'un, just show us the hidential spot where you seed him,” he continued, turning to the old fellow, who still pointed up the hedgerow. “Don't pint up here nor down there, that's not the ticket at all. Where did you *see* him?”

“Whoy, all along theer, to be sure.”

“All along theer! Wheer?” (Ironically). “Did you see him by that holly-bush?”

“Oy, oy, in course I did.”

“Head up the row?”

“Oy, oy, up the row. Oy, sure.”

“That’ll do. Nothing like system.”

“There’s a shillin’ for ye.” “And there’s another,” “and another;” “and there’s half-a-crown, old buck.” And well we weet that rustic had never seen, much less experienced, such a shower of silver in his life before. A second fox had stolen away, and in a few minutes the joyful music was once more ringing through meadow and glade, through hollow and upland—away, away! The scent was breast high, and the morning did not belie its appearance. We won’t stop to discourse on “scent”—everyone knows what a capricious thing it is, and how many an apparently good scenting-day turns out a

deceiver, and *vice versa*. It was not so now, however.

“Yonder he goes!” And well ahead, travelling up a small pasture on a hill-side, bold Reynard was seen for a moment, in full view of the whole field. The first few fields were flat and easy, with small fences. Over these Newton managed to get, after a fashion. To be sure, his seat was anything but perfect or pretty; still, he managed to hang on somehow, and as he scrambled over them he didn’t tumble off, and that was the great thing. To say that he was in a state of excitement, and that the blood went tingling up to the roots of his hair, and then down to his very toenails, would be only the truth. He was actually in the very heart and marrow of a run at last—at least he thought so. Was there ever anything, is there anything, like it? Stag-hunting! Pooh! steeple-chasing’s as interesting. Currant-jellying! Bah! sport for grandmothers. Fox-hunting is fox-hunt-

ing, *per se*, and there's nothing like it. It beats—ah ! it beats cock-fighting ; and so Newton thought, as, with his horse well in hand, he went bowling along at a smart pace over the grass.

“Pard’n me, sir,” said a groom, riding close alongside of him on a horse which seemed familiar to Newton, and jerking out his words between every stride, as he kept close to, and just clear of him, with an ease Newton could not sufficiently admire. “Pard’n me, sir, but t’other gentleman’s gone’d ’ome. Ye see, I stopped to see the throw off. And when he got out of the ditch, he d—d fox ’untin’—lor, how he did d—n fox-’untin’, to be sure ; aint it blasphemious to d—n fox-’untin’, sir ? He swore he wouldn’t get upon a ’oss again if any one ’ud die and leave him a fortin’ to do it ; and so he said as he’d walk ’ome, as he knowed the way, and I was to lead the old ’oss ’ome arter him, sir ; but, pard’n me, sir, ’taint often we gets sich a chance, sir, and I

made bold thinkin', as the 'oss *was* out, and *wouldn't leave the cry of the 'ounds* ; thinks I, well, it's a pity to spile the will of a 'oss *as is so fond of it* ; so I thought, ye know, sir, I'd jest come and look arter you a little way, and then, in case of any haccident, I should be ready with a spare 'oss, sir. Pard'n me, sir, but you should allus stick yer knees in at a thing of that sort. All right, sir. Here you air."

Newton and Joe (it was Joe, of course) had gone at a fence which had been freshly made, they having swerved a little for that purpose ; Newton's horse touched it with his fore feet, and although he got through somehow, he bungled at it, and Newton came down soft in the adjoining fallow. A slight shake was the only damage ; his horse scrambled up with Joe's assistance, and, nothing daunted, Newton once more ascended to the post of honour, and then began to think, for the first time, of his absent friend. How wonderfully

selfish we become under the influence of excitement. The fresh fox had entirely driven Mr. Chilliun from his mind.

“ Dear me! Ah! to be sure. Yes, Chilliun’s horse, of course it is. Thank ye. Yes. Oh! I suppose it’s all right. And so he’s gone home. Walked, eh? Very foolish of him. Why didn’t he turn to and give that whipper-in a good horsewhipping? Well, it can’t be helped. Thankye, that’ll do, all right,” and they were off once more.

“ Well now, ’pon my soul, I likes to see that. I likes to see a gent take no notice of a purl. It show’s he’s a plucked ’un, and no mistake, that’s wot it does. Now, sir, pard’n me, sir, but I *should* like to see you get in,” he continued, as the hounds came to a slight check—some sheep had stained the scent. “ So don’t you go to take none o’ them breakneckers, nor none o’ them yawners, ’cos—pard’n me, sir, for sayin’ so—you aint quite up to it p’raps. You’ll see a hedge or

two and a ditch, and likewise, p'raps, a wall or two afore you're quite done. I've seed many a young 'and (good 'uns, too, some on 'em) spoiled by ridin' at wot they didn't ought to. Ridin' well t' 'ounds aint larnt in a 'urry; there's a many things to be consulted—the country, and the like o' the fences, and yer 'orse, and cetrer, and the 'ounds, and the scent, and all sorts of things. Bless you, I was whip to the Trumpshire myself once till I 'ad a haccident and couldn't ride regler no more. No, it aint larnt in a day more than nothin' else is, not to do it well. People as don't know nothin' about it gets on a 'oss and comes out a fox 'untin', and thinks that they has nothin' to do but to ride down two or three kipple o' 'ounds mayhap; never mind what sich fools as them thinks or says about ridin', 'cos it aint no manner o' matter. But pard'n me, sir. Don't do heverythink you see some o' the rest o' the field do. Fust place, sir, they may be better hoss'd than you be, and, bein' older

'ands—pard'n me, sir—they may know better what to do with their 'osses, and, consequently, they'd very likely get safe over where you'd get sich a cropper as 'ud spoil you, with p'raps a collar-bone bruck. Take everythink you thinks you can take, and a little you mayn't be altogether sartain about, 'specially if you're obliged to ; but don't go at wot you knows you can't, jest for the look o' the thing. Some people thinks that's bold ridin' ; but, pard'n me, sir, others thinks it's the hactions of a fool. Now, sir, d'ye see that stout old gent. Now, sir, he don't ride short o' seventeen stone, and yet he's always *there or thereabout*, and you don't never see him do nothink werry unhansom. Well, you look to him, whenever you comes to a buster, keep him in your eye, and do pretty much as he do, and you may depend—*always per-wided your oss olds out*—you may depend that when they runs into him you'll be there or there about too. Pard'n me, sir, but my

motter's, Never ride over a gate when you can open it, and always spare yer oss if you can, and he'll spare you; but, on the other hand, never crane nor shirk at nothin' as you're in duty bound to take." Here a hound threw tongue. "There's old Reindeer, I'd swear to him among a thousand. He's o' Countess's stock, o' the Strongbow-strain he is—as true a hound as ever feathered. Lor! Lor! Don't I wish I *wos* a whip again!"

The cast was successful—the scent was hit off, and the challenge by Reindeer was once more taken up. Hey over the hills and far away. There was no time, nor any wind either, to interchange a syllable now. Newton did pretty much as his mentor had advised him, as the advice seemed good and was given in good part. Now we don't want to make our hero the hero of the day, and we scorn to stumble into the vanity-hidden pitfall which some authors fall into, in supposing it absolutely necessary that their

hero should shine pre-eminent, in whatever situation or society he may find himself. It would be, according to the usual practice of many writers of works of fancy and fiction, to make our hero upon his old screw, never having followed hounds in his life, and with only six weeks' practice at fencing, &c. &c., pass a whole field mounted upon more or less thorough-breds, and flying over terrific walls, frightful ravines, and swollen rivers, to rush in and seize the brush, just as its owner lay struggling on the ground with the only couple and a half of hounds up, and nothing else in sight—we say this would be in accordance with too often the style of thing in which dealers in fictitious horsemanship, on paper, delight to indulge. Truth, however, compels us to say that nothing of the kind happened. He certainly did keep an eye upon the gentleman who rode about seventeen stone, and did much as he saw him do when anything unusually formidable pre-

sented itself—a process which consisted in either walking quietly through a gap, leading his horse over, or lifting a gate off. A man who rides seventeen stone, and desires to be *there or thereabout*, can't be expected to take everything. But bad riding, and a bad horse, are bad adjuncts to see the end of a run with.

Newton had once, when his horse rose at a hurdle in a gap, found himself on his beam ends on a muddy bank, which retained a neat and correct impression of the base of the bags which inclosed the honour of all the Dogvanes ; and once, when his contumacious beast refused at a brook, not being accustomed to water every day, he had found himself head-first in it, shooting out of his saddle over the horse's neck, with the swiftness and precision of a cross-bow bolt. It was an undoubted cooler ; and he had to fish for his hat, which stuck in the mud with his crop. The gingerbread nuts, too, came to

grief, and, when he put his hand in his pocket for his handkerchief, they presented an appearance and consistency commonly denominated as "todgy." The brandy, though, was all right, and his horse, on both occasions, fell to cropping the tufts of grass when he had got rid of his ride, as if he were used to it, and was easily caught again.

So far so *good*—not that we advocate cold baths in the winter-time. But, the next field being a very heavy fallow, Newton was pounded, and, looking round, he saw the stout gent who rode about seventeen stone, whom he had rather left in the rear lately, walking quietly through a portion of the brook which was fordable, about a hundred and fifty yards up; and whilst he was in this position, one by one the field dropped out of view, until he was alone. The cry of the hounds grew faint—fainter; anon he heard them again, then a dip, and it ceased entirely.

“ Devilish pleasant. Come up, you brute. I suppose I must get off and lead him. Wet through to the skin, eh? Never mind, the brandy’s all right,” and he felt for the little case-bottle, and tested it of course. “ And the sport is, by Jove, magnificent—glorious—won’t I practice the ‘ Ta-a-liho, Hoi over, Hoic forrard, Hoick—hoick to Reindeer.’ How musical it is! Talk of Sims Reeves and Adalaida! That’s all very well in it’s way, you know. But where the deuce am I? Here’s a field, and there’s a brook, and yonder’s—ah! yes, yonder’s some smoke, and where there’s smoke there’s fire; so come along—Gee ho, Dobbin, gee ho, Dobbin, gee ho, Dobbin, gee up and gee ho”—sang Newton, as he led his baked steed towards a gate at the right hand side of the field. Another field and a short lane brought him to a farmyard, the buildings being masked by a row of elms—“ Egad! this is lucky. What a thing it would have been to have to go

stalking about over fields, and hedges, and ditches, towing a beaten horse after you. Now, if the farmer's half a good sort of fellow, he'll give a fellow a chance of drying himself."

And the farmer was a good sort of fellow, as all farmers who live in hunting countries ought to be, and for the most part are, a regular trump was Joskins, or whatever you like to call him. Again I beg to say, not at all what *Punch* and Co. represent him in a general way to be. Ignorant! Fiddle-de-dee! What, because he minds *only* his own business, and talks in a *patois* which he and his men understand, and which alone his men could understand! And doesn't your cockney or your Lancashire *ouvrier*, talk in a *patois* or isn't it ignorance in them?

It would seem strange, all this misrepresentation, this perpetual nibbling at the land by the commercial interest, as it is

called. When the corn laws went down, what could it find to cavil at afterwards? The stupid old cry of ravenous landlords and jolter-headed farmers, one would have thought, would have ceased. Does the commercial interest complain that corn is dear? It has almost passed into an axiom that the price of it is not determined in this country; then (for in a sporting novel the subject is a fair one) county magistrates and game laws come in for a strong share of animadversion, and the Bokums and Twisters of the Stock Exchange and cotton interest complain that they fill the gaols. But the Bokums and Twisters fill their gaols tolerably full too, somehow, without game-laws, &c.; and thieves will exist in the country as well as the town, and (if they couldn't steal game) ducks, geese, and turkeys would take their turn.

It is not the law relating to game as game which sends nine-tenths of the

poachers to prison, but the law relating to game as property. The law relating to game as game cuts chiefly at the gentleman. He must not kill game at all, not even his own, without a licence, and some thousands of gentlemen, in consequence, pay 4*l.* 1*s.* 10*d.* annually for the privilege. To say the least of it, this is a source of revenue. But the law relating to game as property is simply—"You must not take from my land, or any one else's, what does not belong to you." Surely there is nothing very unreasonable in a gentleman who has bred, fed, and protected pheasants, and other game, at an expense of something like a pound a head, preferring to kill and eat them himself, to allowing Giles Scroggins, who never directly or indirectly contributed one farthing to their support, to do so, and who, when he is found stealing them, inclines to murdering a keeper out of hand rather than to going with him quietly.

How would Bokum and Twister like a visit from him, attended with this "black eye and bulldog," some fine day, when engaged in their paddocks, among their Cochinchina and Brahma Pootras? and how would they relish a terrific smash on the head, accompanied with any amount of bad language, if they endeavoured to prevent his knocking down and pocketing their favourites? There is not much difference in the cases. My field or my wood is as much mine as Bokum's paddock or Twister's poultry-yard are theirs. What else have they to grumble at? Surely they won't grumble at a landlord demanding rent, or getting the best he can, because they may become landlords themselves some day, when they will have to change their opinions—no great difficulty it would seem, for they always make the most unscrupulous screws and the sharpest nippers when they do.

What then is the grievance? They can't bear to see anyone doing well but themselves. Their great saint is Sir Robert Peel, who made a huge fortune, but ruined his country,* and they say in every act of their lives, "There is no God but Mammon, and Peel is his prophet." But he musn't be your prophet; for it is only the *commercial* interest that has any right to buy cheap and sell dear. So, come out of that, you ignorant Joskins, and tyrannous, game-preserving, gaol-filling landlord. Just feed our workmen for nothing, will you, and thank our gracious mercy, which allows you to live at all in such an age of enlightenment and improvement.

* Sir Robert Peel's currency laws will yet ruin this country. He doubled the National Debt, restricted the bank circulation, and placed it in the power of some half-dozen great capitalists to convulse the entire monetary and commercial system of this country at any moment.

The fact not to be concealed is that the old British merchant, with his sturdy honesty and individuality of enterprise, has gradually disappeared before the company, the gambler, the time-bargainer, and stock-jobber — men without country or principle, void alike of patriotism or honesty ; and the entire commercial system is rotten and baseless, while manufacturers are scrambling for fortunes, and are not satisfied with *living* and working steadily up to opulence, but have gone on screwing and screwing and producing flashy rubbish, and pressing into their service machinery and everything which can possibly cheapen labour or do away with it, in order that they may undersell each other, until profits are at length at minimum, and they are beginning to feel the curse of their own avarice and hunger, and are constantly casting about and seeking what or whom they may devour to prolong their own existence. But, maugre

carping misrepresentations, England may still be proud of her agriculturists ; they are the same honest, hard-working race they ever were ; they are the real back-bone of the country, in spite of all that may be said of them. Long may they remain so ; and heaven help that country that has no other interests to look to or protect it but commercial interests ! But these jealousies between land and commerce should never have arisen ; agriculture and commerce are twin sisters, and ought to go hand in hand ; and it is bad for that country where they disagree—it proves “ a house divided against itself.”

All this while, however, our hero waits at Joskins's door—not that he did wait there, by any means. But we must beg our readers to excuse the digression we have been led into, for it is so seldom the commercial interest does hear the truth, that it is a pity any opportunity should be

lost of telling it them. Newton made his way to Joskins's, and he was warmly received.

"Gentleman's horse to stable, Will'm. Wet through and through? dear me! coom in, sir; coom along. I'll lend 'ee a rough change, while yourn's dryin'. Always glad to see fox-hunters, tho'f I don't follow th' sport. A' used to't when a' was young; noo and then and again, jest for sport like, a' used to saddle t' old chestnut, and tally ho away with the best on 'em. But, 'pend on't, a varmer's never so well placed as when a's t'ome. The men woan't foller the pleugh while the varmer's a follern th' ounds. As poor old veather used to say, 'Tummas, if thee goes to the dogs too often, thy property 'll foind the way t' goo there too.' Missus, do 'ee put a rasher or two, and a yag (egg) or two t' toast; and hot up a glass o' yale, wi' dash o' ginger and drap o' gin in't."

We do not see any *unpardonable* ignorance in all this ; and, reader, this wasn't an hotel, recollect, and there was nothing to pay for it ; yet this sort of thing is not at all uncommon—nay, it happens every day in fox-hunting countries, ay, and in countries where fox-hounds are not, amongst this selfish, ignorant, benighted set of joskins and chawbacons. We appeal to anyone who has had opportunities of judging, is the case overstated or exaggerated ? And here for a parting fling. Suppose, reader, you'd tumbled into the Thames by accident, do you think that any of your city magnates—the Lord Mayor or any of the commercial corporation, for instance—would take you in and make you comfortable, and lend you a suit of their own sable, while your own clothes were drying ? Do you think, if you approached the freshly-cleaned door-steps of a Lancashire mill-owner, in piteous state, and leading a draggle-tailed horse

after you, and requested a little shelter and firing, that he'd offer you a gratuitous change and a hot snack, and put your horse up, and give you whatever his house afforded, chatting pleasantly and jovially, and neglecting his business for politeness or hospitality's sake meanwhile? No; I say emphatically, he'd see you d——d first. And now, having landed Newton in good quarters, we must get back to the hunt.

“It's the pace that kills.” After leaving Newton pounded in the fallow field, Reynard took down into the valley of the Booze (we don't know if there be such a stream in any part of the country; if so, that is the Booze signified). Skirting the bank of that sweet little trouting beck, (it is a trouting beck, we believe), he took across the little foot-bridge near Greylingford (and there is a Greylingford, with a little foot-bridge just below it, on the stream, it is to be hoped; if not, the reader must really enter

into a contract with us to supply one). Setting his head straight up the bank, he gained the pasture above, and held right away for Niblington earths. (How often the reader, when reading sporting fictions, has run his fox into those very identical earths!) The pace had been severe, but did not abate as yet. A slight check occurred, which gave some of the almost pumped-out ones time to draw out a fresh lease. Off again, and the D—I take the hindmost; and there *was* a hindmost every minute, who never got any further forward. Our friend Joseph was one of them. “Well, I should a liked to a seen the end out,” he said, as he led Mr. Cheeker’s property off to the nearest refuge, “for I call’s that fox a ripper.”

“Lift that gate, Charley,” said the Hon. Carysford to the party whom we have heard talking to him on familiar terms at the commencement of the chapter, after another ten minutes or so, “this can’t last.”

“Unless the vulpine be a species of demon or gnome fox, I should say not,” gasped his friend, dragging his horse up by the roots almost, and saving him from the results of a severe stumble. “There’s Porkey perched,” he continued, as they come almost to a standstill, and subsequently to a staggering walk, and looking round, Carysford beheld the gentleman who rode about seventeen stone, and whom his friend had designated Porkey, stuck fast in a very stout bullfinch—from which there was no escape but a half leap, half scramble, and whole tumble.”

“I never knew him a hundred miles off at the finish, nevertheless,” answered Carysford, pumping considerably himself.

“Hold aside for me, old fellow, I’ll do as much for you. What a d—l of a hill this is! The game’s almost up.” And so it was, for on the other brow of the hill, up which they were now struggling, was a

small plantation, in which were the earths referred to. The hounds had been running almost mute for some minutes. Reynard struggled gamely for the longed-for haven of safety—a short two hundred yards, and all would be over. He may not reach it, however. The dreaded pack rush into view of him, they race up the gently shelving brow. He charges a stone boundary wall—once past that, escape is almost certain; but his strength fails him at the last leap, and he falls back exhausted into the fangs of his tormentors.

“Who-ó-o-oo; it’s all over.”

“And a deuced good job, too; eh, Gus?”

“Rather. We were very near rowing the little boat, though. Phew! pass us the tea-canister. He’s a whopper, isn’t he?”

“As game a fox as ever chewed bunny,”

said a short, puffy, gasping voice behind. They looked round. It was the gent who rode the seventeen stone, and who always *was* there or thereabout, and who was leading his blown nag in, both of them shewing extensive marks of the last bullfinch's handiwork.

“ Well, Tom, how many does that make ? ”

“ Thirty-three sir. Ask pardon, sir. *Will* you take the brush, sir ? ”

Time, 65 minutes. *Telling-time*, as somebody says, an hour and a half. Distance, from *point to point*, 18 miles. What the telling distance might be, we don't pretend to say, but leave it to the conscience and computation of the reader.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. SPELTHORNE.

“WELL, ye see, as I was a sayin’, me and Bill Hardham, the Richmond Vet, wos havin’ a glass at the door, wen ’oo shud drive by, but Dicky Sutton, with Sir Jim Belcher—*we* calls him Captain Jim—in a Witechapel—or, no, let’s see, a Newpit Pagnel it was, however. They’d just bought a ’oss at Kingston fair—chopped one hows’ever—and wos drivin’ him ’ome—likely looking ’oss he wos at a distance too. Jest as they kem abreast, Bill sings out, ‘Hallo, Sir Jimmy! why, what ’ave you

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there? Lor sakes, man! I thort a full private wos nearer your mark, than a capting.* 'Capting be—' says he, 'wot d'ye mean by that, Doctor?' And he jumps out in a dooce of a hurry, and runs to the 'osses 'ead. 'I means what I says,' says Bill. 'You bought that 'ere 'oss of William Staggers, and William Staggers sold you a capting.' And so he wos too—reglar full-blowed capting. Massy, how Sir Jimmy did go on—you never see a cove so raw in all your born days. He'd had a deal with the governor a few weeks 'afore and didn't like the wenture—that 'ere little chesnut mare with the thorn on the near knee—you know'd her; and so he goes to the fair, and chops her, and 'parts' stiffish too—for a capting. Well, it worn't no joke agin him for the futur, you may believe; and that's how they called him capting Jim."

The speaker was the Hon. Mr. Carysford's

* A horse that is glandered is called "a captain."

confidential groom, who was discussing the contents of a brilliant pewter with a brother groom, who formed the audience. The place the mews at the back of Toffington-street, and the time within a few minutes of three o'clock on the Thursday succeeding the events of our last chapter.

“Knowin’ card, the guv’nor,” said the companion groom.

“I tell ye wot, Jems, he is that—all that. There ain’t a gent his ekal in a deal, as ever I knowed. We’ve got a young green comin’ here this here blessed hidential mornin’, to buy that ’ere black thing of Coalbox’s, the cold meat purveyor’s.”

“What! the hundertaker’s ’oss, as stands long o’ your’n?”

“Jest that.”

“But what’s he to do? Go in a keb or a broom?”

“Not nuffin’ o’ the sort. He’s a ’unter to carry ten stun ten.”

“ Well, I *am* blowed. Why, it’s massacrein’ of a hinnocent.”

“ Cuttin’ greens, ain’t it ? ”

And the worthy pair indulged in a quiet grin, interspersed with nods, winks, and wipings of the pewter.

“ And wot’s the terms ? ’Ow much is Coalbox to stand in for ? ”

“ A score and a ’arf. All over that the guv’nor sacks.”

“ Well, ’ere’s luck to the deal. This is the guv’nor a comin’, ain’t it ? ”

“ That’s ’im, and no mistake ; and the young goslin’ along with ’im.”

At this moment the Hon. Carysford and Newton were seen approaching down the yard. We must premise that Carysford, having noticed Newton’s anxiety to know Mrs. Spelthorne, determined to accommodate him with an introduction, providing, as was his wont, “ he stood in a little ; ” and so he made the introduction, to a certain extent, contingent

on Newton's buying a horse of him. Of course, if Newton didn't buy the horse, he could hardly expect the introduction.

Unassisted, and in the hands of such a trio, the result could not for a moment be doubtful. The circumstances of the deal, and the discussion which took place, need no recounting here. There was no such thing as a difficulty, a fault, flaw, or blemish; the slightest chance of one was lied away instantly. It was a pure piece of dirty roguery; and the gang—for they deserve no better name—took Newton in to their hearts' content. He, fancying he was dealing with a gentleman, signed a check for seventy guineas in the most unsuspecting mood, handed it to Carysford, and "the black mare, Countess, fit to *follow* any hounds" (at what distance they did not state, she having been used principally in one of Mr. Coalbox's hearses), became Newton's property. Three months afterwards she was knocked down again to Coalbox and Co., at Aldridge's, for

fifteen pounds. No warranty was given or asked for; and Newton's first essay at horse-dealing was hardly as successful as he could have wished. The transaction at an end, the hon. gentleman, taking Newton under his charge, sauntered off with him in the direction of Beakwink-street.

Beakwink-street was a quiet little street in the neighbourhood of Berkeley-square. Many gay equipages might from time to time be seen standing at the doors in Beakwink-street, although the street had a modest, retiring look about it, which made them seem somewhat out of place. Knocking at one of the doors, after an interval of a minute, it was opened by a pale-faced, studious-looking footman, in a subdued livery.

"Her ladyship at home?" asked Carysford, impressively. The studious-looking footman glanced for half a moment at Newton, as if taking his measure, and then replied:—

"Her ladyship is in her *boodwar*, sir, and will be visible to *you*"—and he led the way upstairs to a small, elegantly-furnished drawing-room, where he left them for a moment.

"We're in luck," said Carysford, who was in high spirits at the thought of the cheque in his waistcoat-pocket and the gold-mine by his side. "A woman is never seen to such advantage as in a well studied *deshabille*."

Newton looked round the room. It was a trifle *over-furnished*, and the contents looked a little out of place—indeed there was rather an untidy appearance, if the truth must be told; still, everything was as expensive as velvet, gilding, and Persian draperies could make it.

"Humph!" said Newton, half aloud; "she must be very well off, indeed."

"Well off! I wish I had half her money," said Carysford, who had watched

closely Newton's glance round the room. "Things seem a little out of sorts," he continued; "but she always has an evening, or a concert, or something on Wednesday nights, so I suppose they've hardly had time to get straight. I almost wonder we were admitted."

The servant returned.

"His mistress would make her appearance immediately;" and he busied himself by putting a chair or two in place, and, whisking a broken lustre off the mantel-piece, he vanished.

The door opened—a slight rustle as of a zephyr sighing through distant leaves, and *the* Spelthorne—the Honourable Mrs. Margaret Spelthorne, made her graceful appearance, followed by a staid-looking French woman of middle age, who was a sort of half companion, half ladies' maid, and who played propriety when necessary and fulfilled the arduous office of goose-

berry-picker in ordinary to Mrs. Spelthorne, whenever her presence was required for that purpose. Mrs. Spelthorne was very beautiful. Fair, with one of those transparent, changing complexions where a blush is ever mantling. Long, curling, chesnut hair ; a clearly-defined mouth, with thin, well-cut lips, which would have looked deceitful and tigerish had they not been cherry red. Large, soft, false hazel eyes, full of light at times, and full of shadow too. There was something in the expression of her face which, while it reminded you of Paradise, did not allow you to forget the serpent, either. She was dressed, *à merveille*, in a ravishing morning dress, which concealed, and yet half displayed, the beauties of her figure and form. She was clever after a fashion. But her favourite subjects of conversation, as it seemed this morning, were of horses, dogs, hunting &c. The opera, the theatre, the drawing-room,

and such topics, instituted apparently for the purpose of allowing folks who can compass or talk of nothing else to interchange the usual generalities about, were dismissed in a few words ; but when the subject of hunting was introduced, Mrs. Spelthorne, who had complained of headache and dulness, brightened up and went off at a great pace, treating the subject as one well acquainted with it, and neither avoiding nor eschewing hunting or stable terms, and dealing in a very fair amount of slang appertaining thereto as if it were a matter of course. Indeed, she “called a spade a spade,” as the phrase goes, with a most bewitching mixture of simplicity and *insouciance*. Newton could not help remarking this to Carysford as they left the house ; his answer was very characteristic :—

“Oh ! gels with any blood in ’em just say or do what they like, sir. It’s only

your snobs and snobbesses that speak and do by weight and measure."

After a few minutes' conversation, Newton ventured to say that "he thought he had seen her riding in the park with a friend of his, Mr. Bowers," and he watched her face as she replied :—

"Bowers? Certainly. Yes. Dear little Teddy. Do you know, Mr. Dogwood, he's an admirer of mine. And really and positively now, I declare I think that I'm *almost* in love with him. He is so refreshing, so charming, after the *blasé*, matured wickedness and hard-heartedness of town. What was it Lady Hinckley said of him, madame?"

Madame looked up from a slipper she was embroidering inquiringly.

"Of that Mr. Bowers we rode in the park with once or twice," continued The Spelthorne?

"Ah! Ma foi! Yas, bon. She say he is von veritable Bower ove evergrins."

“Bower of evergreens. Yes. Very good, wasn't it?” she asked in the most cool and unconcerned way of the maligned individual's particular friend.

It was useless to watch her countenance ; there was nothing distinguishable behind it ; and, if she had not most perfect mastery over it, she had nothing to conceal. Anyhow, there was nothing to be gathered from it, particularly by so unpractised a physiognomist as Newton ; and the process was a dangerous one ; for once, when Newton met her eyes turned inquiringly upon his, as if to ask what he was looking for there, a feeling as of giddiness shot through him, and warned him of the danger he incurred, even defended as he was by a triple shield.

“Talking of Bowers, though, doesn't he live near Crookham, somewhere handy to Dealmount, Sir John Vasey's place ? asked Carysford.

Newton answered in the affirmative.

“ Oh ! I’ve got the most charming little cottage in that neighbourhood,” said Mrs. Spelthorne. “ The fact is, I want retirement. I am weary of town life and dissipation. I mean to live there in the summer, and get up archery meetings, and races, and balls, and all sorts of things. Is that Deal-mount, with the large gates, and the scutcheon with a boar and an axe on it ? I thought it must be. Ah, then, my cottage is just half way between there and Crookham. Such a jolly little place ; I mean to have it smothered with roses in the summer. The stables are being repaired before I can go to it. What is Sir John Vasey like ? Is he grim and elderly ? He doesn’t mix much in society, does he ? I thought not. Rides a bang-tailed cob, doesn’t he ? I know him then. I’ve a great mind to set my cap at him. Carysford, I’ll bet you a box of gloves—or no, I won’t bet gloves ; you swindled me in the last box. I’ll bet you a bonnet

to a hat—that's fair odds for a lady—that I draw the badger in a month, he drops in to tea in six weeks, and in two months he's on his knees."

Thus the fair lady, when at all excited, rattled on.

"I'll register the bet with the greatest pleasure," said Carysford. "The old boy—not that he is a very old boy—not much older than I am in fact, only, living in the country at grass so long, he runs to seed quicker; but he's a kind of relation of mine, and something or other comes to me at his marriage—a few hundreds, I believe—not much; but in such desperately hard-up times as these, one mustn't be particular." And Carysford rose to take leave. "On second thoughts, though," he continued, "the bet's off. I won't give you any inducement to exert your talents in that quarter."

"Why not?" asked the lady.

“Because,” answered the gentleman, with an excessively gallant obeisance, “I can’t spare you; I want you myself.”

“I’ll never have you, Charley.”

“Don’t be too sure of that.”

“Charley, Charley, Charley, you’re too mercenary for me. You want my money; confess now.”

“Egad,” said Carysford, laughing, as if to hide his confusion, “I want anybody’s money I can get, bad enough; but I will be candid enough to do you the justice to say, that I should not look upon you as an incumbrance to it.” And he bowed again.

“Vastly polite, I’m sure. Well, I’ll think of the offer; and mind, if I choose to hold you to your word, I’ve two witnesses to it, in case of a breach of promise, But a truce to nonsense. Do you ride in the Park this afternoon?”

“I’m afraid not; it’s too public for me.”

“What! are you so badly wanted? Then

I won't have you, that's flat, for I've a horror of the Bench."

"There is a strong desire on the part of 'the people' to make me a dweller in the tents of Israel."

"*Au revoir*, then. I shall see you in the evening?"

"Provided nothing very particular happens in the meantime."

"Bring Mr. —"

"Dogvane," said Carysford, supplying the name.

"Mr. Dogvane with you to one of my evenings; I shall be pleased to —"

"Number him in the chain of your admirers," put in Carysford again. "Insatiate monster; what appetites women have for admiration! Spare him—pray spare him."

"I won't," said the lady; "I mean to reduce him to slavery." And, laughing, they took their leave.

"A very pretty look out this for poor

Ned," thought Newton to himself. "I hope he isn't very hard hit; but she certainly is very handsome," and he pondered. "What a desperate coquette she is; just the woman to attract Ned. Carysford may call her thorough-bred, and so she seems to be at times; but now and then there is a tone of coarseness," and he thought of Charlotte and Bessie, "which repels and grates upon one — a sort of don't-carishness. Is that blood and high breeding? Pooh! nonsense! There's puddle blood in her veins, and she's earthy, earthy. Poor Neddy!"

A few days afterwards, as he was strolling through the Park with Mr. Chilliwn, the lady passed them, driving her little Arabs. Newton took off his hat, and bowed. Mr. Chilliwn was transfixed on the spot. Mrs. Spelthorne pulled up.

"Oh, Mr. Dogvane, I havn't your address, or I would have sent you a card for this evening. Now I must give you an oral

invitation. If you can find time to do yourself the pleasure, I've some very pretty girls coming. Who is your smitten friend? Really I am quite afraid of him. He looks as if he would devour me."

"That!—Oh, that's only Chilliwn, of the Redundancy."

"Of the Redundancy! Indeed. The Redundancy?" and she appeared to consider. "And what is his standing? But no matter; introduce him. I've some interest in the Redundancy, and if I like him, may be able to help him. You see I appreciate genuine admiration, like a true woman, Mr. Dogvane; and I'm afraid my vanity is all-devouring."

Newton thought it was indeed; but he said nothing, and did as he was requested. Mr. Chilliwn was rather bashful, but got through the ceremony tolerably well; and when he received an invitation also for the evening, his delight knew no bounds, and he redoubled his thanks to Newton for making him known

to such a "divine creechor, sir; and I say—you know, Dogvane. Look here; what a jolly trump you are, old fellow."

They went. There were a few elderly tabbies—sharp, intriguing-looking old files; some middle-aged, well-dressed, fashionable-looking dames, and five or six very pretty girls, one of whom was a young Irish girl—an heiress, it was whispered; another was French; but the prettiest of them all was a Greek, whose name Newton could not remember. There were two or three members of Parliament—men of standing, and who took leading places in debates and motions, &c.; there was an under-secretary of some department; several foreigners; a baron or so, be-frogged, be-whiskered, be-ordered; a Russian attaché—a very quiet, gentlemanly fellow, apparently.

There was a hum of lively, clever conversation, broken now and then by a ringing laugh; a little very good music; a waltz

or two; some eating, with very tolerable drinking; plenty of flirtation; and a good deal of card-playing. Mrs. Spelthorne received them with politeness, introduced Mr. Chilliwun to the young Greek, and gave Newton a curious portfolio of engravings and prints to look through; and having arranged a whist-table to her own satisfaction, sat down to it—the under-secretary and Carysford against one of the barons and herself. The stakes were evidently high; for, as the evening passed on, and Newton looked up from time to time from the folio, he saw slips of paper passing, and an anxious look upon the young secretary's face, as if he was losing largely. As for Carysford, there was no emotion visible on his face; possibly he was too practised a gambler. Newton, having got through the prints, left them, stood by, and looked on at the game.

“Are you fond of cards, Mr. Dogvane?” asked Mrs. Spelthorne, carelessly, after

having played out a hand, the result of which was the scoring of three points against her. She seemed fidgetty.

"I like whist tolerably well," answered Newton; "but I never play high."

"Picquet is a nice game, do you know it?"

Newton pleaded ignorance.

"Ah! then you ought to learn it. Madame plays beautifully, and will be delighted to teach you." She telegraphed her attendant. "Madame, here is Mr. Dogvane dying to learn picquet of you." And Newton, who had not had a choice in the arrangement, spent the remainder of the evening in fathoming the mysteries of picquet. It wasn't a very lively affair; so he retired early, leaving his friend Chilliwun still deep in conversation with the young Greek, and feeling himself still less inclined to look upon his friend Ned's entanglement as an advantageous one.

"A pretty, graceful woman playing short

whist!—and for high stakes too!” Pah! the idea was positively repulsive to *him*. “But there’s no accounting for taste,” thought Newton. “A widow—hunts and plays whist!—hem!—shouldn’t wonder if she don’t smoke. Fancied I detected the flavour of it when we called the other morning, but set it down to Carysford. Heigho! what fools men make of themselves when they get spooney.”

“Well, Mr. Newton,” even the author can’t help exclaiming, “I never!”

CHAPTER VI.

MR. CHILLIWUN IS BENT ON YACHTING.

"I SAY, ole f'la, look here—I've had some doosed good news. What d'ye think? My aunt's been and gone dead, and has left me eight thou. in her will—not a bad haul—is it, old bricksey, wicksey, icksey?"

Mr. Chilliwn was quite facetious; and Newton thought he had been indulging in a "morning" rather before his usual time, and hinted at something of the sort.

"No, no—honour—honour bright! but

we did drink her health last night, for she's a jolly good fella and all that, you know. Whiskeywitch and me, and one or two others, all good sorts. And I'll tell you what we decided on—that I should buy a yacht. By Jove, we did! And there's the Gleam, twenty-five tons, I'm going to look at at Blackwall. She's to be had for under a thou., I'm told; and she's quite fit, with a little alteration or two, for sea. I wanted to throw over the office altogether; but Whiskeywitch advised me not on any account to think of it; and Whiskeywitch told me—that is, whispered on the quiet you know, that he knew some one who knew somebody else, you know, who might perhaps be able to work the oracle for me, if I applied for sick leave, you know—for three months' leave, d'ye see? That's six weeks to my six weeks, you know; and so, by Jove, I applied, sir, and, by Jingo, I got it; so

now, by George, next week I shall have three months clear away from that infernal old tape and paper shop, and perhaps I won't have a time of it—mind you, I'm to have a distinguished party, sir—to entertain 'em. Whiskeywitch says he'll come, and Carysford's coming, and Mrs. Spelthorne—the Spelthorne, and Madame Petrovich, and your friend Ned's promised to look down on us for a day, and several others. And my leave begins on Thursday week, and I'm going down to look at the boat now; and look here—if you like to come down, we'll look at her together, and you can give me your opinion, you know."

All this was said in a confused sort of jumble, which proved that Mr. Chilliwun had not thoroughly recovered his devotion to the cause of his deceased relative's *health* on the foregoing evening. Still, knowing how very easy that unhappy youth was to pick up, as the word is—and the more

so, that he fancied himself gifted with sharpness and some cunning, for the reputation of which he would have sacrificed every point—good, bad, or indifferent—which he possessed, and every virtue, cardinal (Qy.—why always cardinal?) or otherwise under the sun, Newton resolved to go with him. I may say, *en passant*, that Mr. Chilliwn was, and is, by no means singular in this peculiar pride of his, which has now so increased as to become a national evil and a moral pestilence—an evil so gigantic and destructive in its effects, that a country infested suddenly by all the plagues of Egypt at once would be in a far better condition than that of a country generally affected with a mania for cheating, and lying, and swindling, under the fiction that trade lies are no lies at all, and that a man's business requires him to be a scoundrel.

Now see what all this, which threatens

to reduce England to the level of Norfolk Island, springs from, and comes to. I do not conceive that dishonesty begun with the trading class; we must look higher. Vices work downwards; they don't commence at the bottom and work up. The full blown flower of vice is shamelessness, and that we approach. Our transition commenced when we begun to invent mild names for ugly deeds. I buy a horse or dog, or deal with a so-called *gentleman*. In the majority of instances I get cheated worse than if I trust a dealer. If, by chance, he doesn't cheat me, *he associates without shame with those who do*. If I call any *gentleman* a cheat and a liar, the *gentleman*, if he has pluck, (which some of these *gentlemen* have not, however, now-a-days) knocks me down on the spot, and society is proportionably shocked at "*a gentleman's* using his fists like a cabman, sir," he is considered to have degraded himself. It also professes to be greatly shocked, not at the deed itself—that

is a matter of *no* consequence—but it is shocked at my *coarse expressions*, and looks upon me as unmannerly and unfit for it; yet, it demands some mythic resentment or other from this *gentleman*, and that he shall not bear or suffer such language, though it denounces duelling frantically, for fear at any time it might be called out itself. Now, here is a manifest puzzle. A man may *be* a cheat and a liar in such things as these to any extent; but you must not call him a cheat and a liar. If you do venture to speak the truth for once, society insists that the *aggrieved* party do not remain under the imputation, but do something or other damaging to me. It looks upon fisticuffs as very low indeed, and denounces pistols as barbarous and atrocious; well, what is to be done? people can't be cheated and deceived without mentioning it sometimes—so society, taking the thing under its grave consideration, decides that, as it cannot do

away with cheating and lying, it will do away with all offensive words calculated to produce breaches of the peace, and it passes a resolution that some harmless and inexpressive words be substituted for cheat and liar, at which no one can take offence, and it is voted that the verb "to do" be prostituted vaguely for the use of all *good* society. The verb "to do" is so treated forthwith throughout, not only good society, but being a remarkably convenient and inexplusive sort of word, it is adopted by all society, and thus the difficulty is solved to the satisfaction of all parties—*ergo*, you can say to a man "what a *do* you are!" and he smirks and looks "I believe you, my boy," back to you, for he is proud of it, positively. There is nothing offensive in it, and you've rather paid him a compliment, and your appearing vexed or angry, when you utter it, merely affords food for amusement. The words removed are dangerous weapons—edge tools

not to be played with. They *were* arms for the direct purpose of preventing the acts of cheating and lying, which a man could appeal to directly. But society removes all private arms, as being inconvenient and dangerous, and thus it becomes civilized and undeniably *softened*, whether it gains or loses materially is another point. Having thus done away with the offensive words, and there being nothing particular further to restrain men in their dealings with one another, "It's a do," and "he's a do," and "I *did* him and you've done me," come into such common use, that from horses and dogs and so forth, a principle so convenient extends to merchandise and general dealings, and onwards and upwards, until Joint Stock Banks, and British Banks, and Surrey Gardens, and unabashable Railway Companies are mixed up in one great *olla podrida* with Pauls, Palmers, Redpaths and Waughs, until the connexions of the Do family become so exten-

sive, and their transactions so absorbing and astounding, that the world's eyes literally turn round in the world's venerable head with amazement for the first time since the flood, and after wondering whether this is what Englishmen have been bragging of so long by the name of commercial honesty, business reputation, respectability, and so forth; and after glancing at sundry little matters, wherein the most incredible breaches of faith, not only commercially but politically, have been perpetrated in its name, and considering further that the tree must be evil, indeed, which produces such fruit, the world begins to think that it may as well button up its pockets, and have nothing whatever to do with such a nation of swindlers. And eventually John Bull finds Rogue's Island a marked locality like the old mint in Westminster, and he has very good cause to wish that he had not allowed his society to do away with words of

such dire import. As a nation, in our dealings with our neighbours we have lately been eminent for cheating, robbery, and oppression, and daily things grow worse in this respect, and we call it foreign policy, profess not to be able to control it, and rest content in seeing the name of England dragged through a maze of villainies, each one worse than the last, until even one of the most corrupt amongst the corrupt holds up his hands and says "What next?" All this could not have taken place had individual honesty remained to us. But now individual dishonesty is stripping the last rag of the cloak of pretence off the shoulders of collective dishonesty, and ere long we shall stand before the world in all our deformity and carefully-acquired ugliness, a mark for the finger of universal scorn and reprobation. From such little things do great ones spring. The deduction from all this is, that dishonest atoms must inevitably make a dishonest aggregate,

and that honesty is the best policy after all, under any and all circumstances. *Revenons à nos moutons.* Mr. Chilliwn, representing the *mouton*, desirous of placing himself in the hands of experienced shearers, who would speedily denude him of his fleece, even if they left his skin behind. Newton agreed to go with him; Mr. Chilliwn retired to his lodgings, dressed, and got himself into a calmer state by the application of cooling fluids, and in due time they found themselves at Blackwall.

“Bolt and Teak’s hoffice? that’s un, sir,” and following the outstretched finger of the workman, they entered a dingy, rather shabby-looking office, although a considerable deal of business was transacted in it in the course of the year. Bolt and Teak was in his office; he was a coarse, common-looking man, and he was a stoutish man, and wore a blue waistcoat and white pearl buttons, and on his head was always a heavy, crown-crushing, forehead-

branding, glazed hat; it wasn't altogether certain that he did not sleep in it, only this couldn't be easily decided, for Bolt and Teak was a species of weasel in that respect. Fancy anyone catching Bolt and Teak asleep. Rotherhithe would have grinned, and Poplar have split its very sides at such an idea, while the neighbouring Island of Dogs would have cachinnated forth a canine chorus of yells, and even the very tunnel would have pulled down its left under eyelid and requested to know whether you saw anything reminding you of "the country" therein. No, no; why, Bolt and Teak was a little boy to a Jew slop-seller in Ratcliffe Highway originally, and nicely he was "dragged up" there, and I remember when his preternatural sharpness attracted the attention of a speculative slop-broker, who transferred him to his counting-house (by courtesy. It was the fag end of a steam-boat's cabin, doing duty for an office; and here Bolt and Teak learnt the remaining thing or two

he had not learnt at the Jew's, and got a Christian polish on his Jewish education. After that, he got head clerk to a contractor, and had something to do with the "government preserves." Nothing in the game way *meant*, though these preserves were undeniably high and gamey in flavour, as the inhabitants of Gosport and Portsmouth whilom testified, when they insisted that the little tin pots should be divested of their cat and dog contents—those luxuries being of an inexpensive and easily-obtained nature along the banks of the Thames, having been substituted for prime beef and mutton—at the very least as far from the towns (in themselves not very savoury places) as Spithead. But Bolt and Teak prospered through all, and finally became an agent (comprehensive word!) and had to do with ship breaking and broking, yachts and stores, &c., and, as people were wont to remark, anything which passed through Bolt and Teak's hands didn't want selling again.

Our friends, therefore, had about as much chance with Bolt and Teak as folks say a cat has, in a certain warm locality, when deprived of its claws. My goodness! how he did stick that yacht into them. She was of course all that was wonderful, and Bolt and Teak, seeing the ignorance and thorough softness of his customers, indulged himself in some little bits of facetiæ, of a semi-professional nature, small to be sure, but indicative of the man. "Sail! she could sail nineteen knots, and that's what he called 'going large;' as for sailing into the wind's eye! she could poke the wind's eye clean out with her *flyin' jib-boom*, and for 'eatin' into it,' she'd eat into it as if rocks wos lemon rocks, and eyes wos bulls eyes and alicampane. Well, now, what did you want more of a yacht than that?" and our friends, not understanding one word of these curious qualifications, were forced to look wise, shake their heads, and murmur "nothing."

"Then, as for stowage and accommodation ;

there was the accommodation-ladder down to her accommodation, and there was her bread basket, which everybody knowed was in the waist of a wessel—which, being a ‘she,’ of course couldn’t be supposed to be without a waist, you know, and what did you want more than that? Room! there was as much room as there was in a purser’s accounts for tobaccy agin dead men, which everybody knowed was the roomiest thing in all creation, and what *did* you—what *could* you want more than that?”

“Nothing, of course—nothing.”

“Well then, look here—copper bottom.”

“That’s a great point,” put in Mr. Chilliwn, attempting to look knowing, and having some vague, misty notion that that was a necessary advantage.

“I she’d rather think so. Why, she had too much copper on her bottom, afore that lot was took off and worked

up into coal-scuttles for the marines' mess aboard of the Baltic fleet, so that was all right, and you couldn't want more than that? And then, only look at them spars of Riga pine. What did you see in that stick now? Hadn't they had to wait for three cargoes to pick the primest one of all the lot from, and was there ere a yacht in the sarvis as had such a stick? And what did you say to that? And look here—Cap'n's cabin, saloon, berths, washing apparatus, patent—d'ye see, all patent—mark that! Steward's room, crockery-shelves for heavy weather—patent swing lamps, ball and socket, and no mistake—all right and first rate. Galley—there you are now! Room! look at that. Chain cable, bang up, first chop, A 1. Material—patent, likewise, by Swain and Snap, of Poplar—three hundred fathom, in case you should be took short and brought up all standin' in

the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. What did you want more than that? And as for sails"—kicking off the hutch—"look at that—that top un's the jib. Ah! that's a spanker—that is," said Bolt and Teak, after a moment's reflection, during which he was considering whether it wouldn't be advisable to stick another fifty on the price, on his own private account. Having settled this in the affirmative, he gave utterance to, "Ah! that's a spanker," in praise of, and reference to, the jib. Mr. Chilliwn had been handling a piece of tolerably well-worn canvas, having lugged it up towards him by an eye, and misunderstood the application of Bolt and Teak's words, and having somewhere heard of some sail called a spanker, slowly replied:—

"Oh! that's *her* spanker, is it? and a very fine—sail—it—is." He said this with a slow nod of appreciation to

every word. Now, seeing that he could not possibly see anything of the sail in question beyond a huge roll of canvas tied up like a string of sausages, it was a desperate and hazardous assertion merely for the sake of appearing knowing.

"Ah!" said Bolt and Teak, "so you *do* know a spanker when you sees one. D—n me, your a dark 'un and a deep 'un, you are. Who'd the deuce a thought you'd know'd so much about it?" and drawing Mr. Chilliwun on one side, he said, "Come now—it aint no use of bamming of me, Cap'n—you're in the navy, you air. That's what you air; and where was your last command?—come now."

Mr. Chilliwun protested—

"Ah! stuff—he knew he wasn't in the navy—come, you know."

"What's the use o' tellin' of me that? D'ye think I'm a horse? Is a man agoin'

to tell a spanker when he sees it in the sail-room and all, and then say he aint been in the navy? It won't do—you may pitch me any gammon you choose, Cap'n, but mind, I've got such a thing as a navy-list at home. I knows, you know."

Mr. Chilliwn still protested that "you know he might know a thing or two, you know."

"Thing or two," quoth Bolt-and-Teak, in apparent dudgeon. "Why, you knows everythink, you do. Look at them remarks o' yourn on copper bottoms jest now. You're puttin' the leak into me tidyish, I don't think."

Gross as all this was, it was milk and honey to Mr. Chilliwn, and he sucked it in as a babe does pap, and it is almost needless to say that the charge of being in the navy bought or sold the Gleam, and Mr. Chilliwn also, at the same time.

They rejoined Newton hastily, because Newton had walked forward and was looking

over the bow, and Bolt-and-Teak's eye was on him—he mistrusted Newton a little, simply because he did not talk. Mr. Chilliwun *talked*, and consequently became the prey of Bolt-and-Teak without an effort—Newton had not yet shown his colours; moreover, in her last cruise, the Gleam had sprung her bowsprit badly. Not that Newton would have noticed it, if she hadn't any bowsprit at all. Bolt-and-Teak easily drew him away from the bow, and seeing by his eye that he had not detected the spring, and arguing therefrom that he wasn't likely to detect *anything*, he breathed again.

“Well, now, we haven't said anything about price, Mr. Teak,” said Mr. Chilliwun; “and though I'm disposed to be liberal, mind, don't you open your mouth too wide.”

“As if I should ask *you* too much, Cap'n. Why, Lord, you'd twig it, you would, and 'ave it off in a moment. No, no, I knows who

I deals with. No, look here, the howner o' this 'ere craft left it to me to fix the price. He won't be best satisfied unless he gets a clean thousand for her, and I *might* ask a thousand of some folks, still I shouldn't think of asking you more than nine-fifty. I know it wouldn't do, ye see, you'd know it was fifty too much."

"I should say a hundred too much," said Newton, speaking out for the first time.

It is very odd, the anxiety which everyone present invariably has to have something to say on a *deal*. If Newton had said five hundred too much, he wouldn't have been very wide of the right mark.

"Oh! should you?" said Bolt-and-Teak, drily, and shooting a sly glance of venom at the officious friend. "That's nothin' to do with me; excuse me, sir, for speakin' out—for, mind, I aint sellin' my own property, and my duty to my employers demands me to ask a FAIR price. I have asked—and I can say

no more, no less than nine-fifty. Yachts is scarce, very scarce just now. There was lots of three hundred ton'ers for sale. He'd rather sell 'em one of them, he'd half a dozen on hand, if they'd look at them. But twenties and thirties,—particular, five-and-twenties. Ah! should he tell them how many gents and lords had looked at this very five-and-twenty they stood upon? Ah! they needn't buy her—no—but she wouldn't be on his hands not three days, nor two days. There now—see that gent just gone into my office?" and he pointed towards the door, which a person was actually at that moment entering.

"Now, sir, that gent has actooally come about this werry yacht, and I must go to him directly. Is it to be nine fifty? Yes or no?"

An animated discussion here took place. Mr. Chilliwn, who was still anxious to display his preternatural keenness, suggested nine twenty, and then nine twenty-five.

“Now I tell you what,” said Bolt-and-Teak, “you shall come along of me and see that gent; he offered me, it’s as true as—” and sundry tolerably stiff oaths backed the forthcoming lie—“he offered me nine forty-five for her yesterday, and him and me only parted over the fiver. Come along of me, and see if you don’t believe me, and seeing, you’ll allow, is believin’.”

Accordingly they went on shore.

The gentleman was merely a city connection of Bolt-and-Teak’s, a swellish-looking youth enough, who had called on a little matter of business; and a skilful wink, with a leading suggestion and question or two, soon made him acquainted with the part he was to play, and between them our friends were soon brought to agree to the “nine fifty” without diminution. A mem was at once drawn up, a hundred pounds deposit extracted by Bolt-and-Teak, and the purchase was made and ratified.

"Next thing, you'll be wanting a Cap'n and a crew—o'course."

"Why, yes ; I must have one, I suppose," said Mr. Chilliwun, doubtingly.

"Quite impossible to do without, as I can see—I ain' heerd o' no patent to do without 'em, though there is patents for all sorts o' things now-a-days. Have you ere a one in your eye?"

"Why, no—no, not exactly."

"Not ezactly. Then what do you purpose to do, if I might make so bold, Cap'n? I knows of a good 'un ; first rate article—ken 'andle a yacht like a 'umming top, and no mistake ; and as for testimonials—my eye ! Lords and gents, no end, a good score on 'em, *he's* got. But there—you'd better see *him* yourself. He sailed the Iphuginé, and Cap'n Clarkson's yacht, and was mate aboard the commodore's own craft, and, Lord, I can't tell you half. Steady as a pump bolt ; sober and honest as one o'clock, and as for a

sailor! why, he's won more matches than all the other Cap'ns put together. He ain't likely to be idle long. Indeed, I know he's in treaties; still a little better hoffer, ye know, might decide him to close with *you*. Of course its nothin' to me, he's no particular friend of mine, and I don't get nothin' by it, not a scuddick, you'll understand—how can I?"

The villain—"how could he?" Mr. Chilliwn had pretty good reason to know how he could and did. Suffice it to say that such a treasure of course was worth seeing, and they saw Captain Rigdum, and not only saw him, but believed in him, for he was as plausible a scoundrel as ever robbed a till or a locker without being sent to Newgate for it. Of course his testimonials were humbugs. He *had* sailed one or two yachts, and the testimonials of their owners, if he had taken them, would hardly have got him another command. Of course Captain Rigdum (a

discharged mate from the merchant service) was engaged at his own price, and received orders to collect a crew of seven men, two boys, a steward, and a cook, all of whom he declared he knew where to lay his hands on, all of whom were first-rate A. B's., and A. ones, and none of whom would engage with any-one else until they heard from him.

The newly-appointed Captain then walked over the yacht, and said:—

“There'd be a *little* job or two for the riggers, painters, and sail-makers—nothing of any consequence, only it had better be done before they went to sea, and a fortnight or three weeks would be enough.”

Mr. Chilliwn looked rather blank at this.

“He couldn't well spare any time out of his three months; he—a—a, in fact, he understood she was quite ready for sea.”

“Well, you see, sir—so she is, *so far*, but there’s always a something to be done. It may be done though—let me see, in eight or nine days. Ye see, paint must dry, and then there’s—. But there, two or three extra hands could be put on—half a dozen, if necessary, and they’d soon knock it off and lick her into shape. Yes, then—say nine days; and I’ll go ashore and see about it at once. And I’ll call at your hotel with our little agreement to-morrow, my Lord, with your permission. I think you said Mivart’s. No? Oh, I beg your pardon. Oh, indeed, this is the address. Tha-a-nk you. Good day, my Lord—good day, sir.” And touching his hat respectfully, they parted.

“I don’t like that fellow a bit, Chilli,” said our hero; “he’s too polite altogether.”

“Now that’s just what I like. It shews a—a—proper sort of deference, you know, to his—a—commander. Oh! I like him

immensely, and we shall get on splendidly together—I can see that.”

“Humph!” answered Newton.

But what were the two scoundrels talking about?

“I say, Rig., what d’ye think of that?”

“It’s our own fault, Bobby, if we don’t feather our nests nicely out of it. Yah! it’s sickening to have to do with such a flat where you have it *all* your own way. There isn’t a bit of credit in it, is there?”

“Never mind that, there’s plenty of profit.”

“Well—there ought to be. Now then, send some fellows aboard to stick on some paint and tar, and if there’s anything worth a d—n on board her, have it out of her, and send in something else. I don’t mean going to sea, I can tell you, and a little tar and paint hides a multitude

of defects. Come aboard with me, and let's see if there *is* anything in the shape of booty."

It must be confessed that Mr. Chilliwun's case looked hopeful, and that his lamented aunt's bequest stood every chance of being considerably reduced during the next three months.

CHAPTER VII.

A SPLIT IN THE ESTABLISHMENT.

THE Hon. and Rev. Cecil Courtenay was undeniably making progress in the neighbourhood of Crookham. What a dear, good creature he was! Correctly cut, curled, and trimmed, with a slight line of silver here and there amongst his well-oiled locks, which gave a staid appearance to him, causing the tender and *very soft* sex to place that *daughterly* sort of confidence in him, which they did all the more because there was the attraction of there being some little half-whispered, unknown scandal

afoot about him, no one knew exactly what it was, though his admirers pitied him and said he was quite reformed, was living it down,—see how sorry and humble he was, with that alternately downcast and upcast heavenly look, and that would-be saintly smile.

The unbelieving and shrewd observer likened him to a sacerdotal cat, in whose mouth no butter would have melted. Purr—how he crept along—half stealthily, half proudly, with claws and fangs hidden under sleek fur, and well-oiled whiskers. How he improved the aspect of his church with body-colour pictures of disjointed saints, with their impossible hands, dislocated fingers, and wry necks ! What gorgeous draperies and naperies constructed under the nimble and deft fingers of his young lady-believers (of whom he had a regular train) decorated his services ! What wreaths of flowers abounded, and

what imposing music, under the supervision of an Italian maestro, of somewhat looseish and indifferent reputation, pealed forth the anthems, &c. ! And what wonder that the senses of those unused to control of any sort were taken captive and led away by these external influences, under the novelty of a sensation they were unable truly to appreciate?

Mr. Sharp was perplexed with regard to the Reverend Courtenay—very much perplexed indeed ; he pondered long and deeply over him. “Which was it he meant to have? the Baroness or her sister?” He, Tom Sharp, couldn’t make out. He evidently bestowed a great deal of his confidence and a fair share of his time upon both, and they did his schools and charities, and worked endless bands, slippers, and cushions for him in return. They smirked or looked saintly when he approached, or looked at, or spoke to them,

according as he gave them the cue—heavenly sisters!—and quarreled furiously about him when they were alone. Dear creatures, how they did hate one another over him! They would have scratched each other's eyes out, or disfigured each other's faces in any other way, with excessive unction, if either could have gone to a prayer-meeting with the Honourable and Reverend Bone-of-Contention *alone* immediately afterwards. But then there were other girls—plenty of them, too—doing the same thing; sighing at him as he passed them, or sat with them, or left them alone; making saintly eyes and faces at him, with the assumed demureness of sham Christian charity and love, but real hypocrisy of the flesh. Bah! how the pretty little lambs ran after their shepherd, out of the great love they bore to *him*, not his office; how they got up a look, and a shawl, or a bonnet, and made audible responses right under the pulpit, to

attract his eye ; and how good they were and looked, when they did attract it. Young ladies who read this, should you feel the charge come home, if you will desire to have a clergyman for a husband, divest the man from the office—remember you don't marry religion. And don't conceive it necessary, in order to gain a man, to assume forms and looks of religion if it exist not in your hearts ; for assuredly, when the purpose and end of such a course is taken into consideration, such abominable hypocrisy shall be laid heavily to your charge, if you be not held little better than modern Sapphiras for the practical lie.

Mr. Sharp, meantime, dogged the Rev. Lady-Idol about, like a sort of religious sheriff's officer, with an expanse of twilled silk covering his breast and stomach, and displaying no mode of fastening that could be seen, and which seemed to say ; “I, my

brethren, am but a humble waistcoat. True, true, I am of the best twilled silk, and I cost much money ; still I know my place. I am humble and plain—no vain or gorgeous cutting or trimming for me—straight, pious, and well-fitting, is all I could desire, and, in one so humble, buttons are but presumption. Oh, my friends, look on me and regard me, glossy with new piety, ever renewed. I repose on the bosom of a master who is like unto me. Respect us—believe in us—give us your confidence and eke your money.” We don’t mean to say that Tom Sharp’s waistcoat said all this. If it did, it would indeed have been a very marvellous waistcoat, and worthy the notice of Madame Tussaud herself. It looked it, however—it looked it; and if Shakespeare read “sermons in stones,” the contemplative man of the present day may read a sermon on humility, or the pride that apes

it, in each of the stony-looking waistcoats of the saintly of the age. The truth is those waistcoats are mere advertisements paying no duty—every one of the wearers being his own newspaper.

But it must not be supposed that the Honourable and Reverend had it all his own way. No, there was a low church party who scouted and repudiated these things, and the neighbourhood was torn with dissension; and, wonder of wonders, Squire Driffield was the opponent of the Honourable and Reverend Cecil.

Now, the causes of this were as follows. The former clergyman had been rather a bit of a sporting clergyman—nay, one might say, even a poaching clergyman, and worse than this, a boon companion and pot-lover. Consequently, he had been somewhat friendly with the Squire. They shot together, and dealt together, and, it was whispered, sometimes poached a little and

drank a little together, and perhaps a good deal together would be truer, and when he retired from his post, in a fit of apoplexy I think it was called, and the Honourable and Reverend got the appointment, the Squire, finding he was of a very different sort, and, as he expressed it, "not one of his kidney," immediately took to hating the Honourable and Reverend Cecil fervently, and got himself appointed Church Warden for the express purpose of annoying him in every way in his power. Unfortunately, the course pursued by the Honourable and Reverend Cecil rendered this a very easy matter, and the Squire, (as irreligious and immoral a man of his class as the parish could produce,) became at a spring the organ and mouthpiece of a very low church party. And high church and low church raged warmly, to the edification of the small section of Christendom in the neighbourhood of Crookham. Sir John Vasey

and the Bowers of course held themselves aloof from both parties, and felt considerably scandalised at their doings; and Uncle Crabb looked on cynically enough at the disgraceful struggle.

Tom Sharp and his sisters of course conducted themselves like so many indignant and explosive peas on a priestly griddle; they roamed up and down, grabbing proselytes to the flower and flummery cause incessantly, and finally, under their management, a religious establishment was got up, comprised of visiting sisters, and brothers, and fathers, for the conversion of anybody who chose to be converted to something or other which embodied the above ceremonies, with the necessity of wearing queer costumes and being called brother, or father, or sister this, that, or t'other, and a general interference in everybody's business, under a pretence of religious necessity and conversion, and a general bullying and back-biting of those who declined their minis-

tration, and heaven, or rather the other place, only knows what besides. On the other hand, the Squire's party were equally reprehensive in their doings, and the lies, scandal, vilification, and evil feeling, which rode rampant in that peaceful little spot, were astounding. First, the Honorable stuck up things in the church, and then the Squire pulled them down; then there was a row in the church, and a scuffle, and a struggle, and Tom Sharp had his enthusiasm checked by a heavy blow on the nose from the Squire's fist, for which the Squire paid 5*l.* with the greatest pleasure in life, and announced to Mr. Sharp, on that occasion his intention of having another 5*l.* worth as speedily as possible; and as he considered there was a bit of a balance owing to him, he'd try if he couldn't make it up at the next meeting, whereupon the Squire was held to bail in certain sums, &c., and to keep the peace towards Thomas Sharp. Then the Squire and the Parson went to law, and got

injunctions, and then got them set aside, and the whole thing became exciting and amusing to ordinary minds, but a scandal to humble-minded Christians, and a laughing-stock and sneer to infidels and heathens, and to this state came the quiet neighbourhood of Crookham.

As we have said, the Bowers and Sir John Vasey held themselves aloof from it, and they, unfortunately, were the only families who did so. Several attempts were made to shake their neutrality unavailingly. The cool, clear-sighted, and firm nature of Sir John Vasey, who, by a few judicious words, completely disarmed and confused his visitors, showed them it was hopeless to appeal to him. While the peppery qualities of Uncle Crabb, who insisted upon being spokesman in this matter (an office which being necessarily an unpleasant one enough, no one else felt inclined to dispute with him), rendered the task of argumentation, on the part of any emissary, one not very remotely associated with ideas of

broken bones. Still, however, although failing with the men-folk at the Bowers's, the Hon. and Rev. Cecil, through his toadies, the Sharps, did not altogether give up in despair the attempt to enlist the ladies upon his side. Charlotte's temper and teachings foiled all their attempts, but Bessie's nature was more facile, and more easily acted upon.

Bessie's entire innocence, and her perfect reverence for the church, its ministers, and their office, rather laid her open to be acted upon by the influences brought to bear—her adherence to supposed good works, for ostensibly worthy and religious objects, was, therefore, hearty and truthful, and she visited a little, and did a little in the needlework way, too; though she did not object to the music, she thought the flowers, saints, &c., a little unnecessary; yet, if the Rev. Cecil liked to have them, she couldn't see any great harm in them; no doubt he was a very good man, at least she hoped and thought he was,

simply because she could not conceive a man bad enough to remain in *his* situation, and still be bad, whilst acting as he did.

About this time a distant relative died, and left a small property, some 5000*l.* or 6000*l.*, to be divided between Charlotte and Bessie; and from this time the Hon. and Rev. Cecil included Bessie in his attentions—not that he had entirely omitted her before, only his *antipathy* to Uncle Crabb required some strong incentive to get over (could the legacy have been that incentive?)—and these attentions were such as no one could well take umbrage at, or lay hold of, without to a certain extent compromising Bessie's name; and Mr. Newton Dogvane daily found himself losing that respect to the cloth which all decent, well-regulated persons are supposed to cherish—as, no doubt, they ought to do.

One day Newton was sitting on the lawn with the sisters and Ned; Uncle Crabb was sitting a little apart, reading the paper, when

Tom Sharp called, with his sisters, her ladyship and the Baroness now no longer, they having renounced those titles to be called Sister Agatha and Sister Agnese. Their costume was very strict—black crape, white muslin, and red noses. They had come to ask Charlotte and Bessie to take a part in some forthcoming ceremonial. They were always getting up some divine comedy or another.

“Only think, dear, of the joy of heading a procession of heavenly-minded maidens, on such an errand of joy and gladness,” quoth Sister Agnese.

“Bosh,” quoth Uncle Crabb, from behind his paper.

“Dressed in the purest and chastest white cambric,” said sister Agatha.

“Humbug,” said Uncle Crabb, spitefully.

“At twelve and sixpence a yard,” put in Tom Sharp, who desired to be called Father

Ignatius, but couldn't get any one to call him so.

"Twelve and six, sister Charlotte, only think of that!" and Father Tom Ignatius opened his little round eyes as if he wished her to open hers correspondingly, so as to take in that little fact in all its dimensions.

"Twaddle," growled Uncle Crabb.

"Well, I don't know, but I should think it very dear, and a great waste of money. But what makes you call me *sister*, Charlotte?"

"Oh, waste of money, dear!" said both the dear creatures at once, blinking the latter part of the question as neatly and perfectly as could have done the veriest and most practised casuist. "As if money *could* be wasted in such a cause! *What* do you think, Sister Bessie?"

Sister Bessie didn't know what to think, except that it would be a pretty sight, she dared say. But for her own part—

"Wages won't stand, nor pocket-money

either, will they, Bess?" said Ned, tilting up his chair and lighting a cigar.

Newton was fuming and fussing about. He detested the Sharps, Cecil Courtenay, and the whole affair cordially, and never lost an opportunity of giving them a sly dig or a shew up before Bessie, particularly if he could do so without touching her over-sensitiveness too rudely. Newton was a constant visitor at the Bowers', and evidently his attentions were not entirely distasteful to Miss Bessie; and now and then he thought to himself that he was making a little progress. Then again some apparent fit of reserve, on Bessie's part, threw him entirely back once more, and made him fancy that she looked upon him only as a stranger, and thus Newton, as is the wont of all young gentlemen when overtaken by the inevitable passion in real, good, down-right earnest, became a sort of self-tormentor and kept himself in a perpetual fever of alternate delight or despondence. Well, well, it's what

we must all come to, sooner or later. But to return. Newton, of course, dreaded any new influence upon Bessie's mind. He saw that the Rev. Cecil was exercising an uncommon influence on the minds of many young ladies, and he didn't half like the idea of his including Bessie in his flock.

"Hem! where is the procession to go to, Miss Sharp?" asked Newton.

"Oh, to the holy well of Saint Winnegulda."

"That we may lave our hands in that sacred water, and bring therefrom a supply to replenish the font in our church,—it being considered necessary for the purity thereof, that it should be conveyed from the well to the vessel in the palm or hollow of one or more maidens' hands," answered Sister Agatha, in a would-be deep, serious, sepulchral voice. "Am I right, sister?" turning to her sister.

"So says the Chronicle, which our good

Father Cecilius has purported to have discovered," answered in a like voice the good sister Agnes. "What a couple of puzzle-headed humbugs they were!"

"Dear me," said Newton, almost unable to suppress a laugh. "Yes, very imposing, indeed. I think, Miss Bessie, you would look remarkably well, dipping up that dirty water in a cambric suit. And after that, Miss Sharp?"

"Then, sir, we march back to the church again," answered curtly Sister Agatha, who detected a dim attempt at poking fun at her, on the part of Newton. "And there you will be received by—"

"By our excellent Father Cecilius.

"And receive the kiss of peace, of course?"

"And receive the *salutation* of peace," said Sister Agatha; then the sisters coughed, and tried to turn the conversation. Bessie coloured up, and began to look annoyed. But Newton went on:—

“But although, as you know, Miss Sharp, I don’t pretend to understand precisely the peculiar tenets you advocate, not being so learned in these matters as you appear to be, I can’t help seeing the unfortunate ill feeling in this neighbourhood. It does seem to me that everybody ought to be friendly and at peace. Now, oughtn’t they?” asked Newton in a persuasive tone.

“Certainly they ought, indeed;” said Sister Agatha, somewhat mollified at the tone, and the compliment to herself; and not dreaming of what her concession was leading her to. “Certainly they ought, indeed, and if they—”

“Yes, just so,” said Newton; “old and young, of course.” The latter part of the sentence was uttered half carelessly, and Sister Agatha, anxious to get on to her exposition of how peace could be preserved by every body knocking under to that Father and premature Saint—Cecilius—agreed, hastily

jumping into the snare set for her, like a robin after crumbs in a brick-trap.

“Old and young undoubtedly,” she conceded, “and if—”

Flop—the tile fell, and Sister Agatha was a robin amongst bricks.

“And yet,” said Newton, cutting her exposition short again, and not giving her a moment—“and yet, although the old, as you very properly say, require peace much, and perhaps more than the young, I have noticed, and, I dare say, *you* have noticed the same thing—that Saint Cecilia never tries the efficacy of that salutation of his on the old as well as the young.”

“Sir!” said Sister Agatha, aghast.

“Well, but he doesn’t; now, does he? and surely if the old require it, it’s very unfair that he shouldn’t. Now, there’s old Mrs. Chopper.” (The most quarrelsome old lady in the parish, who had only two fangs for

front teeth, who was rather dirty in appearance, and who took snuff, besides possessing a promising moustache.) "There's old Mrs. Chopper," continued Newton, "if ever a lady required to be soothed into a state of peace, she does. Couldn't you include her in the procession? No doubt she'd become white cambric, and I'm sure she would undergo the salutation in a creditable manner."

The vision of fat old Mrs. Chopper in white cambric, and the idea of her undergoing the salutation of peace, and, still more, of Saint Cecilius undergoing it, was so utterly absurd and ludicrous, that Uncle Crabb, Ned, and Charlotte were suddenly seized with a violent fit of laughter. Even Bessie, in spite of all her efforts, lips-biting, &c., could not refrain from a smile, and finally was obliged to put up her handkerchief to her face, and turn her head away. The Sharps rose simultaneously, and, with a dignified

“good afternoon” to all, swept from the lawn in bursting indignation.

It is, perhaps, needless to say that Bessie did not go to the ceremony.

“I say, Ned,” said Newton, as they were walking up and down the lawn half an hour after this, “I’ve thought of something—such a bit of fun. By Jove, we’ll do it, too ;” and Newton reflected a moment, laughed heartily to himself, and then pounded the fun.

“I say, old fellow, there’s all that lot of spoons going to that dirty old Winnegunda’s Well next week.”

“Well ?”

“Well. Ha! ha! I can’t help laughing. Now, we’ll get half-a-crown’s worth of caustic, pop it into the well the night before, or early the same morning, and make niggers of the whole lot of them.”

“Ha! ha! ha! Glorious. Ha! ha! ha!”

“ Ho ! ho ! ho ! ”

“ Ha ! ha ! ha ! ” and the pair laughed at each other, the wicked scamps, until the tears ran down their faces. “ Fancy Saint Cecilius, and Father Tom Ignatius, a brace of Sambo’s, with a retinue of Miss Dinah’s. Ha ! ha ! what a joke ! ”

“ Oh, we’ll do it, never fear ; I’ll get the caustic from town. But not a word now. There’s Bess looking out of window at us, she’ll know we’re up to some mischief.”

The wicked trick was played with perfect secrecy and woeful effect. Six young ladies, in becoming white robes, fetched the dirty water from the sacred well, and having dabbled in it to their hearts’ content, brought it to the Rev. Cecil, who also dabbled in it, and played tricks with it, and two hours later the six young ladies and the six white dresses, and the Rev. Cecil included, were smeared and gammed over with burnt sienna and purple streaks

and crosses, and the Rev. Cecil, to his horror, found his ivory digits darkening—darkening—darkening—from ochre to walnut-stain, from walnut-stain to purple-black. Dreadful! loud were the lamentations, and tremendous the amaze. What was it? What could it be? Had they the cholera without knowing it? No. What was it? It was confined to the procession and those who had to do with the water. Was Saint Winnegunda wroth with her votaries? Was the water noxious? poisoned? Horrible thought—or what? At length a neighbouring chemist pronounced the words “nitrate of silver.” But how? where? which way? who? They rushed to the well, which was in a secluded place amongst trees and ruins. Somehow, to their increased amaze, it was empty, though the drops were trickling, drop by drop, from the rock above, with a determination of replenishing it eventually. Hum! Ha! Ahem! It was very mysterious. There were

several native Burleighs who shook their heads, but could make no more of it. Their only consolation lay in the chemist.

Shrieks from the very low church party, and coarse cachinnation from the Squire.

CHAPTER VIII.

ORNITHORYNCI.

THE Gleam was reported ready for sea. Mr. Chilliwn had visited her once or twice during the period of her re-fitting, and there certainly seemed to be a good deal of work doing,—at least there appeared to be a great many strange people about. But she was ready at last, and previous to her dropping down the river, Mr. Chilliwn, accompanied by Carysford, had gone on board to give orders, and to express approbation of the arrangements, &c.

Captain Rigdum certainly had made her

respectable ; and Carysford, who had busied himself a little in the matter, approved of his doings vastly.

Very spruce and very trim she looked, and her crew in neat white, trimmed with blue, and straw hats with the word "Gleam" in gilt letters on broad black ribbon, *looked* all that that could be desired.

"Well then, Captain Rigdum," said Mr. Chilliwn, as they descended to the cabin. "Ah—you'd better, you know, hoist sail, (Mr. Chilliwn had been studying naval novels, and sea phrases) hoist sail, and "get under weigh," and go down the river. Eh ! that is, don't you think so ?" he appealed to Carysford.

"Drop down to Gravesend to-night, and we'll join you to-morrow morning," said Carysford.

"Certainly, sir," said Captain Rigdum, turning from Chilliwn to his friend, as if he was the only person entitled to give orders.

“Person wishes to see you, sir,” said Bill, the cabin-boy, putting his head in.

Captain Rigdum made his exit; as he brushed by the *person*—a business-like looking party—a scarcely perceptible wink passed between them.

“See me? shew him in, Bill,” said Mr. Chilliwn, and the business-like looking man entered, bowed, drew forth a large pocket-book, selected an ominous-looking document.

“Mr. Chilliwn, I believe.”

Mr. Chilliwn bowed.

“Our little account, sir.”

“Chop and Deakle, Riggers and Ship-painters—hem!” said Mr. Chilliwn, opening the account and looking slowly down it, until he came to the total.

“Good gracious, ninety seven pounds, nineteen and tuppence!” said Mr. Chilliwn, in amazement. “Eh! why—ay! that’s—eh! rather—don’t you think that’s—hem!—stiffish?” and he appealed to Carysford.

"Indeed," said the representative of Chop and Deakle, "really, ha! ahem! we are not in the habit of having our accounts questioned by the noblemen and *gentlemen*—hah! (emphasis on gentlemen) who favour us. You'll observe, sir, that there is a new back-stay, new main-halyard, new topping-lifts. A great deal of new serving, the old being much chafed. Indeed, there has been a good deal of work to do—we think the account extremely moderate."

"But—ah!—who ordered it all?"

"I believe your captain ordered it, sir."

"Eh?" said Mr. Chilliwun, looking towards Carysford again.

"Oh, I daresay it's all right," said Carysford, carelessly, putting his leg up on the settee, and brushing a fly off his trowsers, "I—ah—never bother about bills myself."

This was strictly true; he did not, invariably putting them behind the fire, when

presented. Under these circumstances Mr. Chilliwn slowly pulled out his cheque-book, and wrote a cheque for the amount, which he handed to Chop and Deakle's representative, who placed it in the big pocket-book, replaced the book, bowed once more, saying "how happy they should be to undertake any further orders," and then he bowed himself out.

"Person wishes to see you, sir," said Bill, in the same tone and manner as before.

"Eh," said Mr. Chilliwn, "shew the party in, Bill."

Entered another business-looking man, who pulled forth another large, black pocket-book, selected another ominous-looking doc., and presented as before.

"Shool and Pack's little account."

"Ship carpenters, eh?" said Mr. Chilliwn, "well, I never! seventy-nine pounds, ten and eleven pence."

The former scene repeated, and Mr. Chil-

liwun finally drew another cheque, and Shool and Pack's representative bowed himself out.

"Well, that's all settled, thanks be, and now we'll have a quiet bottle of hock," said Mr. Chilliwun, with a sigh of relief.

"Person wishes to see you, sir," said Bill, as before.

"Eh! what! confound it!"

But a third business-like man was shewn in, who did just as the others had done, and who appeared to be Piggie and Whelk's, (chain-makers), representative, and he wanted "a little matter, only thirty-seven pounds, fourteen and thruppence."

"But what for?" asked the helpless Mr. Chilliwun.

"The items are there, sir."

"Oh, mending chain cable, supplying ninety-seven new links, new ring-bolts—stanchions new—oh, confound it, you know! but the chain cable *was* a new one."

"Might have been once, sir," quoth Piggie and Whelk's representative, with a supercilious smile.

"No, sir, new—oh, new—" and Mr. Chilliwn taxed his memory for the date of its newness, but Bolt and Teak had not supplied him with that exactly, so he finished with "new the other day."

"*Indeed*, sir!—very bad stuff then; *we* found it necessary to supply according to items," said Piggie and Whelk's representative, loftily, and in the end Mr. Chilliwn drew another cheque, and Piggie and Whelk's man bowed *himself* out.

"And *now* we'll have a quiet bottle of hock, for I suppose there's an end of them."

But once more Bill's head intruded ominously, and another person, who proved to be Cagfoot and Pottleduck's, (spar-makers), man, who wanted eighty-five pounds, nine, and sevenpence for a new bowsprit, and a new gaff, new oars for gig, &c. And then

came the boat-builder's man, and next Eyelet and Sawkin's, the sailmakers, man, and Mr. Chilliwn grew angry exceedingly, and then faint, but he drew checks notwithstanding.

"Now they're all gone, and we'll have a quiet bot—"

But no—the carvers and gilders' man came in, and was succeeded by various provision merchants; and Mr. Chilliwn got violently excited, and began to lose his identity in a fit of wroth very unusual to him, and when Bill, for about the thirteenth time, made his appearance to announce the wine-merchant's collector, his noble master boiled over, and flew at him with such unmistakable intentions, that Bill made a precipitate retreat, and left Mr. Chilliwn panting, while Carysford with his leg still up, having fixed his eyeglass in his eye satisfactorily, regarded him with a smile of amusement and contempt combined.

“Bravo, Chilli, that’s the way to serve the blackguards, but don’t be excited.”

“Won’t I, though?” said Mr. Chilliwn, now fairly roused, and rather encouraged by the little bit of applause. “Won’t I, though? I’ll show the blackguards. Tell him to go to—to—to blazes,” said Mr. Chilliwn in a loud voice, shouting up the hatchway, “I won’t pay him a fraction,” and Mr. Chilliwn paused, breathless.

“Then sir,” said Messrs. Slowberry and Pash’s collector, filling up the space above, and obscuring the sky, “then sir, we shall have the” (aspirated) “honour of communicating with you, and I may take upon myself to say that, in all my dealings with gentlemen, sir—gentlemen,” he repeated, “I have not been accustomed to this kind of treatment, sir,—no, sir, not accustomed to this kind of treatment, sir, and I may say—”

“Leave my yacht directly, sir,” said Mr. Chilliwn, gathering way.

“Leave your *what*, sir?” said Slowberry and Pash’s man, with cool impudence, turning up his nose and lip, and looking about him forward and aloft, as he continued, “you don’t call *this* a yacht, I she’d ’ope, h’I call it a ’ooker, without even a gentleman for a howner.”

“If you don’t get out of my craft,” said Mr. Chilliwn, hoarsely, and making a half-rush up the companion at him, “I’ll —” but Messrs. Slowberry and Pash’s collector disappeared suddenly, having had his say, and was seen no more. The end of this little scene was, that a gentleman of the Jewish persuasion came on board the yacht some two or three days afterwards, and made Mr. Chilliwn a present of a little piece of paper, just ten inches long, by two and a half wide, wherein Victoria greeted Mr. Chilliwn, whether he would or no, and commanded him to appear &c. &c. upon such and such a date, and Mr. Chilliwn had the pleasure of paying a very

disagreeable and unthought-of extra to his wine-merchant's bill.

"Well, *now* we'll have a quiet bottle of hock. Bill, tell the steward to bring a cool bottle of hock here, some ice, and a couple of tumblers."

"Yessir." Bill was gone some minutes, and the steward at length appeared, but without the hock.

"I beg your pardon, sir, but, I regret to say, the hock is out."

"Out! why, what's become of the three-dozen hamper I sent down the other day?"

"Well, sir! it's impossible for me to say, but there have been several parties, you know, sir, on board, and between your friends, and Captain Rigdum's friends, I suppose—"

"Captain Rigdum's friends! but eh! hang it! why, I ain't expected to treat all his friends."

"Well, sir! when a yacht is in harbour, sir, there's always a little more license in these

matters," said the steward, with a supercilious smile; "once in blue water, sir, of course things are managed differently, but when a yacht is put in commission, so many strangers come on board for the purpose of admiring her, that you perceive, sir, we hardly know everybody, and of course fearing to offend, we—you perceive, sir—" and with a wave of his hand, he left the rest of the sentence to Mr. Chilliwn's imagination.

"Well," said Mr. Chilliwn, partly mollified by the "admiring strangers," "well, I'll order a fresh supply, and I suppose we must put up with claret."

"The claret, I regret to say, is also out."

"The claret out too—why, Captain Rigdum must have had a pretty considerable lot of friends," said Mr. Chilliwn, sulkily, "and I suppose you have had a friend or two, too."

"It is usual, sir," said the steward, with a half smile of pity.

"Oh, is it?" said Mr. Chilliwn, getting

excited again; "now I tell you what—hang me, if I don't dock it off your wages."

"How much would you desire to deduct from my *salary*, sir?" asked the steward, loftily and correctly.

"Oh! hanged if I know, but, hang me! I'll dock it, you see if I don't."

"May I be allowed to tender my resignation, sir? This is so very unaccustomed, I feel I should be doing myself an injustice to stay. Captain Rigdum too—than whom no one knows better the customs of the service, sir, will feel it unaccustomed, I feel certain, and will tender his resignation too, and *his* crew, of course are also unaccustomed to this kind of treatment. I fear you may expect all their resignations, sir. It's a sad scandal—a sad scandal. A yacht just about to sail too. You'll find it extremely difficult to get another crew, sir, and another captain, sir. Shall I send Captain Rigdum to you?"

All this while he kept his eye upon

Mr. Chilliwn, studying the effect of his words.

"No, I—I, that is, I don't want Captain Rigdum." Mr. Chilliwn stood in far greater awe of his polite captain than he did of his polite steward. "I—this is a deuce of a fix, old fellow," turning to Carysford.

The steward smiled to himself, and half withdrew from the doorway, and looked up the companion, as if to allow time for his words to sink into Mr. Chilliwn's mind, and also for a short consultation with his friend.

"Yes, as you say, it's a fix," said Carysford, carelessly; "but what's the use of making a fuss about a few bottles of wine?"

"But it's six or eight dozen."

"Well, six or eight dozen then. I don't see that it matters much. I'd as soon have sherry—sooner."

"But then, how can I get over it?—It'll be a deuce of a thing."

"Aw! Sure I don't know," said Carys-

ford, yawning; "'pears to me the fellow's right. It's a deuce of a scandal, you see—aw—won't get another captain or crew—aw, yaw! spoil cruise—deuce of a thing. Let's have the sherry."

Mr. Chilliun was undecided as usual—at length he said, despondingly:—

"And the champagne's out too, I suppose.

"Sir," said the steward, looking in. "The champagne, sir? Oh yes, sir, the champagne is out, and the moselle also—they are both out—indeed the moselle was the first to be out, it was much preferred, and I believe it was very good," said the steward, coolly.

He didn't care, he saw the battle was won,—what a general that steward was! What a diplomatist he would have made!

"The deuce it is," said Mr. Chilliun, getting half angry again—it was an expiring effort, and after a short pause he relapsed once more.

“Well, I—I don’t know. (A nod from Carysford). Bring in the sherry.”

The fight was at an end—Mr. Chilliwn was conquered.

He sat down, took pen, ink, and paper, and ordered a fresh supply of wine from a wine-merchant whose address Mr. Carysford was obliging enough to give him.

CHAPTER IX.

AN IMBROGLIO.

THE next afternoon, Mr. Chilliwn took the rail to Gravesend with a portion of his distinguished company, to wit, Mrs. Spelthorne, Madame Petrovich, Mr. Carysford, and a gentleman who was something in the diplomatic way, his name was Whiskeywitch, a most accomplished, polished, and gentlemanly fellow he was generally considered; but beyond this, he was sharp, shrewd, and penetrating to a degree—he appeared to understand every question of the day which became the subject of conversation in his

presence. Indeed, he seemed somehow always to lead conversation; not that he talked a great deal, but he had the faculty of reading his hearers, and making them talk; and by a judicious word or two, which always appeared to be the very ones needed at the moment, and just what the company were at a loss for, he supplied ideas as it were imperceptibly; and many a man, who commenced a conversation entirely in opposition to Whiskeywitch, found himself on the end of it warmly supporting him. How was this? What was the secret? No one attributed it to any particular talent on the part of Whiskeywitch. Of course "it couldn't be talent, because he didn't shine much in conversation, the little he did say always seemed reasonable and right, and what everybody fancied that they had all along thought, and said before. The fact is, it was profound talent, cultivated to the utmost, combined with great knowledge of the world, and those in it, added to a happy knack of

insinuating, by some invisible process, his own thoughts into the minds of those who had none, or, if they had, had them in such utter confusion that they were useless for any understandable form of expression. With these it was a species of builder's art he employed, which erected an edifice out of prostrate heaps of mental bricks and mortar, decayed, choked, and hidden by brambles and noxious weeds. He was, he said, of Polish extraction, and although an admirable linguist, spoke at times with a slight accent that savoured of Connemara. Who Whiskeyvitch really was, where he lived, or what he did, no one could precisely say. He appeared tolerably well off, knew anybody and everybody, including most distinguished foreigners who visited London during the season. If any of them were asked who and what he was, none appeared to know. Some had seen him at Rome, and some had seen him at Vienna, and some at Berlin, at Paris, or Constantinople.

He always was going about the world, apparently doing nothing in particular, and always was well received, and in good, (that is, high) society, or bad (that is, low) whichever he chose, at whatever capital he made his appearance.

Petrovich, as a woman, was the counterpart of what Whiskeywitch was as a man ; who she was, where she came from, &c., &c., &c., nobody knew. She said she was the widow of an officer at the Greek court ; she had the *entrée* in any and all society ; she did as she liked ; went into it or stopped out of it, as suited her. She was beautiful, but beautiful was hardly the word, lovely, fascinating were those lustrous eyes, alternately flashing fire, or swimming in a subdued liquid light. She was the Eve to Whiskeywitch's Adam. Rooms had been secured at the best hotel in the place, and as good a dinner as the obliging landlord could put on the table at a moderate notice, was put on the table by him, and he

himself, with his very own hands, placed the principal dish upon the table in the most gentlemanly and sedate manner; and he himself it was, and nobody else, who cut the string of the first bottle of Clicquot, and everything was very toplofty on the landlord and waiters' parts, and very easy on the part of the guests, as there was nothing to pay for it, save with Mr. Chilliwn, who was fidgety lest anything should not be expensive enough to convince his visitors of his grandeur, and that he always did things in this way, a point which of course he did not quite succeed in. Who does on such occasions? So Mr. Chilliwn contributed his fidgets and his money to the dinner, and his visitors contributed their conversation and their appetites, both of which were piquant to a degree.

Dinner was over, and the dessert languished.

"By the way, Chilli., Cheatem races

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come off some two days from this," said Carysford, in course of conversation; "I've some little interest there, and I suppose you'll run down to Sheerness or the Nore to-morrow, for a bit of a trip; shall you stay there or come back? Not that it matters much, for one is as near as the other, and I suppose you'll have a look at the races. There are some fellows in the —th who have been helping to get the thing up, to whom I'll introduce you, and no doubt there'll be some fun."

"Well—ah—yes! we'll run down to Sheerness or the Nore to-morrow, certainly, and then we—we'll see," answered Mr. Chilliwn.

"Be governed by circumstances, I suppose."

Mr. Chilliwn nodded, and helped himself to claret.

"Think I should like a cigar and a stroll on the pier," he said, as he passed the jug.

"I've a letter to write," said Carysford.

"And I one to read," said Whiskeywitch.

The ladies, however, thought they should like a stroll, and in a few minutes Mr. Chilliwn was the observed of observers, as he took the pier with his two lovely companions, as if it was his own private property; and everybody else on it was merely there on sufferance. A cigar, some ten inches long, stuck between his lips, and he smoked largely, loftily, and gracefully—aw.

After strolling to and fro for some half an hour in desultory talk, the early moon took the place of the waning daylight.

Mrs. Spelthorne thought it was chilly, and left them to fetch a shawl, and Petrovich and Chilliwn were left alone. They sat down on one of the benches

and looked at the river and the moon. A low, droning monosyllabic conversation ensued. Mr. Chilliwn was getting romantic, melancholy, spooney, after his wine. He talked nonsense, and believed it, about the "translucent moon and the crystal river!" Crystal at Gravesend! Heaven and earth! How far gone he must have been. The Petrovich coached him admirably.

After a very warm profession of admiration and attachment, &c., (in which he really was perfectly sincere,) couched in the most glowing and fanciful language he was capable of, full of "I says" and "Look heres," she heaved a deep sigh, and leant over to look into the water, to conceal her agitation of course—not to hide that weary, self-accusing smile of incredulity and disgust at her part—incredulity, because credulity in such a case were despair, and she cared not for anyone

to read her face, and Chilliwn was looking anxiously at it, for although he was absurd, he was honest, and hung upon her accents with fear and hope; and honesty was a thing she had a dread of, and never liked meeting.

“Ah! Arthur!” (By the way, his name was Arthur—odd we never mentioned it before). “Arthur, had I but earlier met one fresh, young, and true heart that could love me, one whom I could love and trust, what a different fate had been mine.”

Strange, she was really speaking the literal truth, and she knew it, but she used it for purposes of deception, as an expert tactician will sometimes beat his enemy with his own weapons, and delight in shewing that wonderful mental capability which makes anything a weapon subservient to its need. She took a pleasure, a wretched scientific pleasure, in rending and torturing her own heart, and casting the

better portions of it from her, with scorn and disbelief. Could a fiend do more? I have often thought that painters and writers, who treat demonological subjects, entirely neglect one powerful point of expression, that, amongst other shadows athwart the fiendish visage, should at times flit that of intense, despairing weariness. Such a look passed across the face of Petrovich, as she raised it from the rail she was leaning on, when her companion replied warmly :—

“But now you have found one—now there is one—oh, divine, angelic crèechor! who would—ah!—who would jump right off this pier-head into the water, like a dog, if you told him to—oh, now, won’t you—can’t you accept his worship and his heart?”

A bad woman of less earnestness, of less intellect than Petrovich, would have smiled, perhaps laughed, at this. But her thorough acquaintance with base metal, and her culti-

vated strength, at once detected the true earnest ring of the poor coin before her. She did not cast it from her, indeed *she cast nothing from her which could be used*. Earnestness was rare, and could always be made available. So she picked it up, and pocketed it, as she would have done any other useful trifle ; looking, meanwhile, as if she were almost too weary to stoop for so small a matter, but did so because it was a habit and an unpleasant necessity she was obeying, which called for no effort worth interest. There was no excitement in the matter, the game was too easy, and she merely turned away, saying, "she was tired," "we will talk of this at some other time, Arthur ;" and with a slight *empressement* in the utterance of his name, which pinned the poor fool's "heart upon her sleeve" to be "pecked at," at pleasure, she turned towards the hotel.

An hour afterwards she was again upon

the pier ; her manner now was very different, but so was her companion. We can overhear snatches of their conversation.

“ He’s a fool,” said the man, “ a mere poor every-day sharper.”

“ He’s useful,” said the lady.

Her companion glanced enquiringly at her. She continued :—

“ He does our little things without knowing what he is doing ; and besides, he educates La Spelthorne. Can you believe it ? In spite of her experience, *Elle a besoin d’endurcissement.*”

“ What ! has she feelings ? ” asked Whiskeywitch, with a grim, half incredulous smile.

The lady nodded.

“ Then she is dangerous, and must be carefully watched.”

“ I think not,” answered Petrovich ; “ the matter will resolve itself, if left alone. I bring them together. He is what you see—

this companionship degrades her. She has a genuine tendre. Ha! ha! or thinks she has, which is the same, for a youth—the friend of this lad's friend. It will be broken. She will fall back on him, *voilà*."

"I see. Good. The *mán* knows nothing."

"Nothing? What if he did? He is ours a hundred times. Listen." And she whispered a few sentences.

"Good, very good," said her companion.

"Petrovich, thou art a jewel."

She continued. "Her beauty and talent are worth it, and there is no hazard. Do you not think so?"

"Assuredly, if it can be done with caution."

"Leave that to me."

"Has he ever felt the chain? Does he know his position?"

"Not yet. But it scarcely matters much. Is it not policy, if he serves our purpose in the dark, to keep him so for the present? Why enlighten him?"

“No—no. He must feel that he is in our power beyond possibility of escape. Up to a certain point give your beast his head, and his own free will. Once on his back, with the bit in his mouth, and the whip in your hands, let him feel and know his utter subserviency. You see the creature is mean; but the smallest animal that creeps the earth has his powers of mischief, and must never be overlooked; for he *may* use them from ignorance. Glance from this creature upwards, and see the chain that is forged, depending on this miserable link. He might, knowing no better, in a moment turn restive and destroy it. He must not dare to turn restive, and he shall know it to-night.”

“Ah! thou art my master,” said Petrovich, earnestly.

“And now, have you studied further the subject we last considered?”

“I have. It is full of difficulty, but a

bold coup will serve us best. The head of that bureau cannot be gained as yet; is that not so?"

"I fear it is. He resists at present."

"Of course he must be compromised."

"But how? Has your woman's wit, ever fertile at expedients, furnished you with the means?"

"Listen," and a low, whispered conversation ensued, when the man's voice once more broke out:—

"It is admirable, but there is great risk—"

"Nay—there is none—see—I have wormed from my little adorer that all documents pass from the higher office to the lower for transmission. Then a draft is taken. They are then compared by the head of the lower office, and no further inquisition of them is permitted. They depart; the complication takes place *sur le moment*. What matter for explanation after the point is gained? Then

see. The Chef, he is compromised, he must, for the sake of his bureau and himself, keep silence. If he does not, we can blacken him, if he does, he has a secret. He is ours. Granted our *dessein* miscarries. What then? It is discovered before it leaves the bureau, possibly. If so, my little adorer is alone to blame; the deed is his; he knows nothing; can comprehend nothing—trust to my skill for that—he is struck with an amaze; he is guilty; on his head be it!”

“Admirable! Still there is risk, if you are discovered.”

“I have thought of all; if I am, my little adorer is generous. The poor little thing is noble, I can rely upon him.”

“The design is perfect,—so be it then,” and, after a pause they turned, walked slowly up the pier, and with a nod they separated as they entered the sitting-room at the hotel. How different her mien now! her eye blazed with excitement and apparent triumph, as she

entered the room but a minute behind him.

Mr. Carysford and Chilliwn were playing at *ecarté*, and Mrs. Spelthorne was leaning over Mr. Chilliwn, advising him on his play, and telegraphing his cards to Carysford, who was sweeping up sovereigns in consequence. With a look of disdain and a smile to Petrovich, when he saw the occupation of the party, Whiskeywitch threw himself into an easy-chair, and compounding for himself a cigarette of some very fragrant tobacco, smoked slowly and thoughtfully.

Petrovich seated herself at the piano; her hand strayed over the chords, until she struck one to her mind, when she improvised a theme and worked it out. The music followed her thoughts, and partook of their sombre nature. Slowly at first the chords rolled from her touch, till wilder and wilder grew the strain, harmony was almost lost, now weary, hopeless, and despairing, and now shrieking harshly

with the sharp torture of a soul in anguish. What a black retrospect, and what a shrinking terror of the picture that strange music presented.

In the midst of this, the door opened softly, and Ned entered; his eye took in the card-playing group: Mrs. Spelthorne was just about to make a sign to her accomplice, when, glancing at a mirror, she saw who it was entering the room, and, with a face like fire, she ceased her occupation, in consequence of which Carysford lost the game, and a large portion of his winnings with it, and as soon as she could compose herself in the least, she turned towards Ned, and welcoming him with somewhat of a constrained air:—

“We hardly expected you,” she said.

“Oh, I heard that a party of you were on yachting bent, and that you had accepted Mr. Chilliwun’s kind invitation, and—and—were dining here to-day, and so I thought as I had also received an invite, and as I was at

Cheatem dining at mess, why I thought that—that is, that I fancied I might as well run over this evening, instead of to-morrow morning. Are you staying in the hotel ? ”

“ Yes—that is Madame Petrovich ; I don’t think you know her—oh yes, though, you saw her with me in the park, yes—well, we sent on and took apartments over these, we could’nt entirely trust ourselves with harum scarum yachtsmen,” and she laughed. This was a lie of course, but it was told in so matter-of-course and matter of propriety a manner that it passed for truth. Nothing like a woman for a good, round, cool, unblushing, thumping—ahem.

Not a tittle, not a look nor a glance of all this was lost to Whiskeywitch, who sat apparently engrossed with his cigarettes and his thoughts.

“ Whiskeywitch—my friend Bowers. Carysford, you know. And now, what will you have ? ”

"Thank you, a glass of sherry and water is all I will trespass on you for at present. By the way, you go to Cheatem?"

"Yes—oh yes, Carysford's a hawse there."

"Two," said Carysford, shortly; "in the Cheatem handicap, Tooraloo and the Tacksman."

"Why, they're entered in Bankers's name," said Ned; "I heard their merits discussed at the mess not two hours ago, and they are making Tooraloo the favourite."

"Ah!" said Carysford, looking up hastily; "I do enter horses in Bankers's name sometimes." Carysford had several *good reasons* for doing so. "And they are backing Tooraloo, are they?" and he smiled an unpleasant smile. "Well, I've got my money on him too, but I want to hedge, and I should like to lay the odds against him. What are they?"

"Why, I heard some of them laying five to four, some six."

"Well, I'll lay you five to four, though *he's light weighted*, and ought to pull through."

Ned shook his head.

"Thank you, I've got all the money on, I mean to lay about it, until I see the horses."

Mr. Chilliwun was anxious to be thought a distinguished sportsman, and hearing a bet proposed which Ned refused, he thought he would shew his pluck and knowledge of the matter by taking it.

"Aw—five to four. It's very *little* odds—very little. I'll take six to four."

A little haggling he conceived to be symptomatic of judgment.

"No," said Carysford; "no, I can't lay more. It's a very small matter at the best, but I don't mind giving you half a point, and I tell you what I'll do, I'll lay eleven to eight. Come, if you want an interest in the

matter, there you are ; it's just a little hedge for me, that's all."

"Hem," said Chilliwn, looking owlsh, by way of pretending great judgment and wisdom ; "hem—well I don't care if I do—so I'll take you eleven—eleven pound to eight against your horse Toodleoo."

"Tooraloo," quoth Carysford, correctingly, as he booked the bet—Chilliwn doing likewise, after his own fashion.

"What was doing about the Tacksman ? Did you hear ?"

"Well, I think—yes—I heard an offer or two of six to one against the Tacksman."

"Ah !" said Carysford ; "indeed ! I should like to take that too, and then my bets would stand easy. Will you lay it ?"

"No," answered Ned.

"I will," cut in Chilliwn, again. "What is it ? five to one against the Tracksman ?"

"Tacksman," said Carysford, booking that bet too.

“Did you hear anything about the Selling Stakes?”

“Two to one against Baretoes, four to one against Campsie, and eight to one against Ragbag.”

“Ah! thanks; I must see about that to-morrow,” and the betting-books were put out of sight.

Mrs. Spelthorne was leaning over the verandah, looking out towards the river. The moon shone brightly into the room. Carysford and Whiskeywitch betook themselves to a hand at picket for half-crowns, Whiskeywitch not being a betting man. Chilliwn looked over Whiskeywitch's hand, smoking large cigars consumedly. The Petrovich still wandered over the keys of the piano absently, and Ned, after fidgeting about indecisively for some minutes, lighted a cigar, gulped down the remainder of his sherry and water at one large swallow, and presently found himself

beside Mrs. Spelthorne, leaning on the rail of the verandah, and conversing with her in a low tone, such as could hardly have been heard in the room. Very little, however, of what passed escaped Whiskeywitch. He heard as much as he wanted to of their conversation. He took particular notice of every change in the Petrovich's playing. He flattered Chilliwun so adroitly, that there did not appear to be any flattery in it, and although that sapient youth could not afterwards call to mind one word that Whiskeywitch had said to him, he retained the impression that he was about the nicest and best fellow he ever met, and in spite of his total pre-engagement, he beat Carysford at his own particular game, and amassed from him a perfect pile of half-crowns, and, greatly to Carysford's disgust, steadily refused to increase the stakes. Carysford was a gambler, but not entirely a

discreet one. Whenever the poor leg—for he was no better—would have shifted a card, or played any of his engaging little tricks, he detected the eye of Whiskeywitch fixed on his hands with a needle-like, inquisitive glance, which utterly foiled him. Once he dropped a card so cleverly that it was almost impossible for anyone to see it, but Whiskeywitch instantly *picked it up for him*, and presented it to him with such truly gentlemanly politeness that Carysford was, as he secretly owned to himself when the evening was over, regularly floored; and finally, when he once more offered to increase the stakes, incited thereto by a reckless and feverish desire for excitement, which was increased by sundry potables, thinking his antagonist would not perhaps play so coolly for a good stake, Whiskeywitch laid down his hand and said:—

“I never gamble, sir; but as you

seem desirous of meeting a 'foeman worthy of your steel,' I don't mind indulging you for once, and playing you one game—mind, only one—but if I do gamble, it must be for something worth while." And he drew out his note case, *pulled the cloth off the table*, and began counting out.

"One, two, three, four, five. There are five hundred-pound notes, and now, if you will be so good as to place by you the same sum, we will commence," and shuffling the cards together, he placed them ready for cutting between them."

Carysford coloured violently, and then said with a forced laugh:—

"You do things so 'en grand seigneur,' I fear I have not so large a sum about me."

Whiskeywitch swept four of the notes off the table, leaving one remaining. Carysford began to hem-and-haw, and to bite his lips

with suppressed wrath at being thus foiled, and Whiskeywitch, with a slightly contemptuous smile, took up the remaining note and placed it in his case, and rose from the table. Nothing could be more insulting or contemptuous than his manner. Carysford, in a tone of suppressed passion, but with an attempt at a smile, asked :—

“What made you pull the cloth off?”

“I was afraid you might *drop a card*, and with the cloth on, we might not notice it, and as the stake was heavy—” and Whiskeywitch, with another insulting smile, left the conclusion of the sentence to Carysford’s fertile imagination.

“Do you mean, sir, to impute a mere accident, which occurred just now, to any intention or—or—or,” and he haggled woe-fully at the word, “unfairness on my part, sir?” and he fairly boiled over, his heavy brow growing rugged, and his moustache bristling with rage.

“Oh dear, no, my dear sir, but these little accidents you see are very useful at times.”

“Sir! you insult me.”

“Nonsense, it is impossible. You!”

It would be difficult to render in any form of words the full weight of contempt thrown by Whiskeywitch into that “you;” it stung Carysford to the inmost quick, he started up, advanced menacingly towards his antagonist, who stood with one hand in his bosom, coolly looking him over as if he was pricing some article of consumption.

“I will have satisfaction for this insult, sir, I—”

“So you shall, I’ll give it you immediately,” said Whiskeywitch, unceremoniously interrupting him, “come this way,” and, taking him by the arm, just above the elbow, where a policeman usually seizes a prisoner, he drew him unresistingly through one of the other windows. Here they stood for a few minutes, Whiskeywitch addressing him in a low but

evidently impressive tone, and when they once more entered the room, Carysford's expression was that of a cowed and well-whipped spaniel. Ringing the bell, Whiskeywitch ordered a cab, and making his adieu to all, the most warmly perhaps to Carysford, who had not yet recovered his assurance, and who did not breathe freely till he was gone, he hastened off to catch the last train up to London, leaving the company to their several devices.

CHAPTER X.

MR. DOGVANE SEKKETH RETIREMENT.

AND now, Mr. Dogvane having resolved to retire, turned his attention towards the country, and seriously commenced a course of reading calculated to introduce him to, and fit him for, the pleasures of a country life.

Oh! ye aspiring cockneys, who think about retiring into the country, and the pleasures of keeping your own cow, your own horse, and your own pigs, and your own poultry, and growing your own this, that, and t'other, don't, for goodness sake, don't delude your-

selves with the idea that you are going to do a little bit of "*otium cum dig.*" Verily, you may dig, but your *otium* shall be a delusion, a mockery, and a snare; for your ease shall be worry, and trouble, and vexation of spirit, and dig you ever so wisely and so strenuously, you shall never realize your anticipations. Take the word of one who hath had experience, and who hath also gathered, as the bee doth honey, from the experience of others, very much in the "*sic vos non vobis*" fashion. Some people are so weakly credulous as to think that by taking "a little bit of land, sir," and knowing nothing at all about land, they can actually—setting aside rent, &c.—make a little money at this sort of thing, or, as they knowingly say, "make it answer their purpose." Let these individuals' friends look after them carefully; the state of their mind is, as the Scotch say, blated and clangamferous, kittle, and no that canny. They've

got a tile loose somewhere. A certain modern author has pointed out the mistake that exists in considering country folks simple,* and recommends the sceptic to live among them; ; ay, in truth I fancy I can see poor old Dogvane or some one of his fellows trying it—a sharp, shrewd man of business in the city, maybe; but oh, what a blessed infant! what an unfledged sucking dove he is in the country! And all because he sets out with the idea that the people he is living amongst *are* simple, because he does not see or believe that they have tutored their countenances to lie. He only sees the stolid and impenetrable look of apparent stupidity. He doesn't happen to catch that short side-glance of low cunning and debased intelligence which shoots at him from under the heavy brow for the least shadow of time, and reads the working of his mind

* Reade, in "Art and Nature."

with astonishing accuracy in his unwary and untutored visage. . Look at the man-of-all-work, groom, gardener, keeper, and what not ; what a stupid-looking brute it is ! You think him honest, good Master Dogvane, and well you wot he is a simple clown. But still he knows his business, and he is not dear, and he has never visited the county jail, so you engage him. But it is curious that your horse, whether at home or abroad, always gets through his allowance of corn somehow. "It med be the rats, and it med be the vovls." So Jem says. But then Jem's so simple and stupid, how should he know ? And how badly your fowls do lay, to be sure. If Jem didn't keep the key of the fowl-house, you'd think somebody *took* them, "but ar's allus such a darned kit o' rats an wuzzles (weasels) about," as Jem says, and so forth.

Then look at this rustic cow-jobber, with all your cleverness in buying, selling, and

bargaining, my worthy Dogvane, you can't buy a cow for, by one third, as little as he can. And as for selling one—don't say a word about it. Now see, you'll pay him just 5*l.* more for that brindled Alderney, which will be dry in a month, than your neighbour Gubbins, the farmer, would with the calf just taken from her, and Mr. Gubbins himself can't buy it within a tithe of what he can. And yet what a heavy, round-shouldered, stupid yokel it is; isn't he now? *You* think so.

Here's *your* pig-dealer—emphatically *yours*—you like to call him yours—it looks as if you sold hundreds of pigs to him yearly—and he doesn't care what he's called, if he's paid for it; you buy little pigs of him, and “little pigs be uncawmun dear an scaace, to be sure they be.” A price is named: you think it exorbitant, (so it is, but you don't really know it by experience) and so you call in Jem—Jem “don't know, raily, pigs is pigs.” You can't deny that, you know; there's no mistake about

it; even a pig wouldn't deny his own identity. Meantime Miss Jane, or Julia, or Fanny, or the *Missus* herself comes out, in which latter case, Mr. Pig-dealer won't conclude to-day, because he'd ten times over rather deal with you than your wife. A woman's cunning reads him at a glance, and it's very little more than an equal match as far as the dealing goes, experience may of course affect the bargain. If, however, only one or two of the young ladies come out to look at the "beeyoutiful little piggy wiggys," you'll hear a rude specimen of rustic gallantry, and possibly a nauseous dose of rustic flattery. "He'd make the purty young lady a present o' one on 'em, darnged if he wouldn't, *if he hadn't got a vamily to look to.* Bless her purty bright eyes. When was they to set the bells a ringin' vor her? he allus ringed the trepple bob; he did, an' darnged if he wornt like to gi'e her a peal—darnged if a wornt," and he slaps his thigh, and looks hideously

adumbrated and idiotically foolish. "He'd take the young ladies 'pinion, she knowed moor about a pig than her veather did (no doubt she did as much) any day," and he laughs, such a laugh.

Have you got the feelings of a father, old Dogvane?

Miss Jane titters, "she doesn't know. Ah! what does Jem think?"

She has great reliance on Jem, who gets her wild-flower roots, and birds' eggs, and such little trumpery, which costs nothing. Moreover, he brings in the first brood of chickens, and always persists ever after in calling them Miss Jane's, and so forth, therefore we repeat she has great reliance on Jem.

And Jem shakes his head, "Well, he don't know he be sure—med be muster the dayler (dealer) ud bate a shillun or eighteen-punce."

At which, muster, the dayler, looks re-

proachfully at Jem and calls him "young man," in a lofty way. And after a haggle he does take off the shilling; though he won't the eighteenpence, "not if you was to go down on your knees."

Jem gains great credit for his talent for dealing, and his honesty is established. But the next market-day, Jem, the "young man," and "muster, the dayler," are to be seen in an obscure public, having a glass together, and sharing the profits of the deal.

Well then, you fat your pigs upon the house and garden refuse, and the butter and skim-milk, &c., and towards the end you give them a sack or two of barley-meal, just to put a finish on them, and muster, the dayler, and Jem enact the same farce over again. Only on this occasion, "Big pigs is raily quite a drug in the market. Everybody's a sellin' 'mout, a had nigh vower hunderd last market-day," with instances, &c., &c.

Of course he gets them at his own price.

So it is with everything you buy, and still more with everything you sell of this sort. You've as much chance with these simple yahoos, my venerable friend Dogvane, as an author has with his first play amongst actors, or his first work amongst publishers.

One used to hear of simple countrymen coming to London, and being picked up by London sharpers, but the legend is evidently dying out; and the type which conveyed this periodical piece of intelligence in the morning papers being worn out, was broken up to be recast in common with the "big gooseberry," "the gigantic turnip," "the monster cabbage," and "the shower of frogs." Well, well, well, farewell, friends of my youth. Every dog has his day, and you've had yours.

But, once for all, as to the *otium* of the country, that principally is enjoyed by your servants; and those only who have lived in the country, and taken rawly to its pursuits, and had a bit of shooting,

or fishing, or land, and what not, and kept cows, pigs, sheep, poultry, &c., &c., and taken great interest and trouble 'about them, I say, they alone know the annoyance and worry these simple pleasures are capable of costing one at times, when taken in combination with country servants, for town servants seldom take to the country, and, if they do, constitute themselves a tenfold greater nuisance than the natives themselves. Have you a favourite pony, dog, cow, cock, hen, duck, goose, turkey, lamb, pig, or otherwise—have you anything choice in the garden way, which you have procured and reared at great cost and trouble, it is about nine chances out of ten that that particular object comes to grief.

Mr. Dogvane, however, had taken his ticket for Arcadia, and thither he meant to go, and so began fitting himself for a residence there; and happening to fall in

with a remarkable little work called "Box on the Cow," he bought it, and read it. Subsequently, he fell in with another remarkable work, "Box on the Pig;" he bought that also, and read it too. And after that, with another remarkable little work called "Box on the Sheep," and after that again, *seriatim*, with several remarkable little works—"Box on Domestic Poultry," "Box on the Horse," &c., &c. Combined with this, he studied "How to Keep (qy. lose) a Horse on Sixpence a Day;" he studied also "Mary Wedlake," and determined to "bruise his oats." Then came "Box on the Dog," &c., &c., &c. Consequently, he soon got "to know all about it," as he phrased it, and thus the conversation would run—when the hissing urn had departed, and Mr. D. had his slippers on, and his spectacles mounted—between himself and his worthy spouse.

(Mr. Dogvane *loquitur*). What's the

first thing, my dear, you would do with a chicken?

(Mrs. D.) Do with a chicken, dear. Well, first I should consider whether it was enough for dinner, and if it wasn't, I should order a piece of pork.

(Mr. D.) Nonsense, my dear,—I mean after it's hatched.

(Mrs. D.) I should think, my dear, that the mother was the best judge.

(Mr. D.) No, my dear, certainly not—you must open its mouth and give it a pepper-corn.

(Mrs. D.) Stuff and nonsense.

(Mr. D.) And suppose, my dear, your horse had the staggers; what should you say to that?

(Mrs. D. impressively.) I should say that the horse was intoxicated.

(Mr. D.) Nonsense, my dear, nonsense—a horse intoxicated, indeed,—absurd!

(Mrs. D.) Oh, of course it's absurd

Anything I say must be ; but I only know that my father's brother, uncle George, who kept a horse, and knew what horses are as well as anyone, used to give *his* horse beer.

(Mr. D., derisively). Beer!

(Mrs. D). Yes, Mr. D., warm, and ginger in it; and if horses drink beer why shouldn't they be intoxicated? and if intoxicated, of course they'll stagger. Don't tell me—horses do drink, sir, and you can't contradict it.

Mr. Dogvane had never viewed the matter in this light, and he was puzzled; however, he would mumble something and refer to Box.

“Well, I only know Box doesn't say so.”

(Mrs. D., triumphantly) Of course not. What does he know about it? Box, indeed! Nothing goes down now but Box. With your Box's—Box this, and Box that,

and Box says the other. *Is* nobody to have an opinion but Box.

(Mr. D., turning the subject, and taking up another book.) Suppose now your pig had the measles.

(Mrs. D.) Nonsense, Mr. D., its positively shocking to hear you talk; as if a nasty dirty pig could have the same complaint as a dear innocent baby. I declare to goodness, you are taking leave of your senses, D. But Box says so of course. The nasty brute! What does he say of a pig when he's teething, dear? Mrs. D. would ask demurely.

(Mr. D.) Well, look here, my dear.

And he presents the open book. Mrs. D. takes it, reads a word or two, throws it into the fire in disgust, and rising in high dudgeon, collects her sewing tackle, and departs for the evening; and Mr. D., after lighting a cigar and mixing his grog, looks wistfully at the burning book, but on the morrow, invests one

more shilling in the purchase of Box on the pig.

In the mean time Mr. Dogvane was not idle, far from it, in seeking out a locality wherein to settle; he was uncertain whether to buy or to hire, and under these circumstances he left a good wide margin in his researches, as to the sort of thing which would suit him. What a weary job that house and estate hunting is, it cost Mr. Dogvane half a year's rent, looking after a place, at the lowest computation; his face became as well known at Checkwax's, the estate agents, as Checkwax's own; whilst Boggle and Pargins gave him address after address until even their smiling complacency was almost exhausted.

He ran down into Buckinghamshire to look at a little property, and he ran down into Bedfordshire to look at a desirable purchase, he ran into Hertfordshire on two or three occasions, he penetrated Surrey in all

directions, and Middlesex he travelled o'er, while the railway officials in Kent became aware of him, the Essex folks saw his rosy countenance more than once; as to the advertisements in the papers, he got quite tired of answering and looking after them, he got so continually cheated in his expectations. *E.g.*, one morning he read the following.

“To let or sell, a desirable freehold estate, comprising a comfortable dwelling-house, with every accommodation for a gentleman's family, with six bed-rooms, and dressing-room; dining-room, 16 by 21, drawing-room, 22 by 19, and breakfast-room, 18 by 17, butler's pantry, and servants' offices; also a 4-stall stable and coach-house, with cow accommodation, and piggery behind, ornamental and extensive shrubbery, with the most delightful grounds surrounding, large walled-garden containing choice fruit-trees, orchard, &c., the most charming and picturesque views, 23 acres of fine meadow land, through which runs a trout-

stream, a branch of the far-famed Brattle, celebrated for the fineness of its trout ; 700 acres of carefully-preserved shooting, two packs of hounds within reach, railway handy, and coaches pass close by. To any gentleman seeking retirement from the toils of business, and desirous of a country life, with a love of sporting, the present investment offers an opportunity seldom to be met with, &c. &c. &c."

Mr. Dogvane read the advertisement. It sounded well ; there was the trout-stream, and there was the shooting. There was the twenty-three acres of land, just about as much as he should like to try his hand on as a beginning. There was the cowhouse, piggery, orchard, garden, and all ; and the house too was about the right mark, and the two packs of hounds handy, not that he cared about that himself, but it might suit New. Yes, this was, considering that the railway and coach was handy too, as near the thing as

any he had heard or read of. So he went to the agents and got the address of the owner of Stawkley House, one Mr. Chipcheese, of Titcomb, Kent. To Titcomb Mr. Dogvane proceeded on the morning after he saw the advertisement. He had travelled by the rail some twenty miles from town, when at a small intermediate station, a bustling-looking, talkative little man, with a perky chin, and a squint in his dexter eye, got into the carriage, and instantly commenced a conversation; the last complaint he would probably have died of would have been bashfulness, and as Mr. Dogvane was nothing loth, they were soon in high talk.

“Going to Titcomb, sir?” he asked.

“Yes,” answered Mr. Dogvane.

“Indeed—so am I—my native place.”

It was Mr. Dogvane’s turn to say
“indeed.”

“Never lived out of Titcomb in my life, and know every inch of ground in and about

it. Every inch; you, it's superfluous to remark, are a stranger to Titecomb. Ever there before, sir?"

"Never," said Mr. Dogvane, as it occurred to him that a person, so well acquainted with the neighbourhood, would be able to give him a little information, if carefully pumped. Pumping, however, was out of the question. The little man dived to the bottom of his business in a twinkling.

"Stawkley, ha, ha, yes—yes—let's see," referring to his *Times*, "here's the advertisement in again to-day—ha—hem; keen card, Chipcheese, a very keen card indeed. Yes, desirable freehold! very much so, very much indeed, oh, yes, exceedingly desirable."

"But ain't it desirable?" asked Mr. Dogvane, beginning to think it might be just possible that he had been made a fool of again.

"That, my dear sir, is purely a matter of taste. Some people are not fond of tumble-

down places, with smoky chimneys, and damp walls covered with green mould, and all that sort of thing. Still that's all a matter of taste, hem! six bed-rooms," (referring to advertisement) "three bed-rooms, two closets, and man's dog-hole over the loft—yes, still they are bed-rooms if you choose. The sitting-rooms—ah! if they were less gloomy, and had two windows instead of one, and if they didn't smoke beyond all cure, they'd be more comfortable perhaps. Butler's pantry, too, ha! ha! ha!" and the little man laughed continuously at this point, indeed he appeared so tickled with it, that he constantly referred back to it for the sake of a laugh.

"But isn't there a butler's pantry?" asked Mr. Dogvane, growing decidedly uneasy.

"Oh! I daresay there is, I shouldn't wonder; servants' offices too!—oh, yes, and a four-stall stable, and a coach-house too. Yes,

yes, very good, friend Chipcheese, I'll christen my cart-shed a coach-house as soon as ever I get home. Ornamental and extensive shrubbery,—very ornamental. Fond of blackberries, sir?" he asked, suddenly.

"No," said Mr. Dogvane, with a strong disapproval, "I hate 'em!"

"Ah, that's a pity."

"Why?"

"Because you'd be able to gather any number of 'em in that shrubbery; garden—well, there is a garden, such as it is; twenty-three acres of fine meadow land—that's according what one considers to be fine meadow land—ahem! *The rushes* are very fine I believe. As for the trout-stream, it's always dry in the summer, and the seven hundred acres of shooting, one-third is a common-right—shared with all the scamps in the neighbourhood—and of the other, about three hundred acres belong to the College of Eton, and the permission

will be closed after this year, I know, and the other two hundred is young Fips's farm, a lazy, loafing, young vagabond, who always goes over *his* farm with a gun in his pocket. The hounds never come within eleven miles, and if they ever do get into that country by any chance, they are whipped off, because its impracticable. As for the rail, it's nine miles off, and the coach, which goes up and down on *alternate days*, it doesn't come at the nearest point, which is the foot of Block's-hill, nearer than four miles and a half. The nearest village, where you have to get all supplies from, is Fingham—that's five miles. Titcomb itself is eight and a half. But don't believe me—don't believe me ; go and see it by all means," said the stranger, seeing that Mr. Dogvane looked partly chap-fallen, and partly incredulous. "Go and see it, and when you return, ask at the inn for Mr. Skipton, and if you will give me a call, I'll tell you of

something good. But here we are. Good morning, sir."

"Good morning," said Mr. Dogvane.

"Think I've fixed Chipcheese's flint—a scamp—why didn't he give me the job of letting his tumble-down old place? perhaps I'd have let it for him. It's all true, that's one comfort," said the stranger to himself, as he left the platform, while Mr. Dogvane was bargaining for a fly to take him to Stawkley. It is needless to pursue this further; Mr. Dogvane went to Stawkley, and at once saw the truth of all his late companion had stated. It is only fair to say, though, that much of it would have passed unnoticed, but for the friendly offices of Mr. Skipton.

Mr. Dogvane drove into Titcomb on his return from Stawkley house. Titcomb was once upon a time a busy little place—a pompous sort of place—but that was in the old coaching and posting days. It was now

a half-deserted country town, smitten by the paralysis of centralism. It had a market, and was spasmodically busy once a week. It had a Statty fair once a year, at which everybody in a smock frock wore coloured ribbons, as an excuse for subsequently getting drunk, it would appear. It had now and then the militia or the yeomanry there, and drums were beaten, and bugles blown, and servant girls' heads turned completely, and it had, in full blossom, a modern invention called "Political Opinions," which is a species of disease, exhibiting in its various changes all the phases of dementation, from driveling imbecility to raving madness. The phase which was endemic at Titcomb was termed by the national lunatic asylum-keepers, radicalism, and meant getting angry and talking loudly, coarsely, vulgarly, and stupidly to people able to appreciate loudness, coarseness, vulgarity, and stupidity;

and it meant abusing everyone in what is called a superior position in life, and imputing vile motives to all they did and said, for the purpose of making the radical talker so disagreeable to these parties, that they might think it worth their while to pay him money to keep him quiet, which they sometimes did, taking it previously and most deservedly from his own pocket. And they had a disputation vestry at Titcomb, whereat Mr. Smith was always wanting to know "why he was rated at seventeen pound, when Brown warn't rated no more than sixteen pound fifteen? and why Brown had a crossing hopposite to 'is 'ouse, when he hadn't one hopposite to 'is? and furthermore why the westry put up the new pump right hopposite to the pa-a-son's 'ouse? and what they meant by charging the parish twenty-four pound, sixteen shillings, and threepence for it, when Straggles could a done it better for twenty-two pound, ten,

nine? And here was Straggles to speak for himself," &c., &c.

Titcomb, too, had a triangular *square*, in which was the market-place, opposite to which was the Red Lion, whilom an inn of consequence, where the coaches put down their passengers to a ten minutes' dinner, involving much subsequent indignation, and such a piece of imposition in the way of charging for it, that the inn should have been called the *Silver Fleece*. From over the porched doorway of the hostelry grinned humourously a huge anomaly purporting to be a Red Lion, whose tail had been stolen in years gone, by wicked wags, and when recovered had been re-pieced to the body by means of iron plates, under the supervision of an artist ignorant of leonine anatomy surely, or he would never have set it on with that peculiar crook in it, which made it seem so out of joint. Bristling up to his nose with wooden skewers, he would have looked fierce,

had not the majority of those appendages long since mouldered away, and successive coats of paint, laid on by other unskilful artists, imparted a squint to his eye, and a general expression of helpless spooniness to his visage.

It was the boast of Titcomb, that the great Mr. Chizzle Leary, the pseudo farmers' friend, who subsequently passed over to the tallow interest, had spoken his maiden speech upon that very same platform where the lion stood, with his arm familiarly round that lion's neck. Hence the lion was one of the objects of curiosity in the town. How many coachloads of passengers had he not seen taken in, from his altitude! and how very few he ever saw now! They were all gone; and Tom and Bob, two baggy-corduroy-breeched, withered old incapables, maundering by the stable archway on sunny days, about "Dawkins' mare, or the Doctor's cob," alone remained of the tribe of smart "boys" and dissipated

helpers, who administered to coaches and post-chaises of yore. Where, alas! were the smart chambermaids, the bustling landlady, and the pompous landlord? Echo, (and there was plenty of space for her to answer in) answered, with a hollow groan, "where?"

Look at yon frowsy-capped, shambling, paralytic old crone, and that sottish, blear-eyed, flabby-cheeked being, just sinking into dreary helplessness and beery imbecility, sole representatives of departed grandeur, and evidences of the mutability of inn-keeping affairs. Ay, ay, *tempora mutantur*, et cetera.

Mr. Dogvane noted a good deal of this as he drove to the Lion, after a long drag in the railway-fly. He enquired for, and found out Mr. Skipton, who he discovered was the auctioneer, broker, upholsterer, house and estate agent, undertaker, coal merchant, wine merchant, bill discounter, &c., &c. of the place. An omnivorous little insect was Skipton, a sort of trading ant-lion, always on

the watch for prey, no matter of what kind, from a bankrupt stock to a dishonoured bill, from a house to a coffin.

There had been one lawyer in Titcomb when things were flourishing, and he got but an indifferent living. Now that decay had seized the place, there were two, both doing well (or ill, as the reader chooses to understand it). The latter importation was a nephew of Mr. Skipton; and there is nothing unusual in the fact of these both thriving, as it is no way remarkable to see maggots increase and fatten, on decay. The nephew lived conveniently opposite to Mr. Skipton's house, in a straight-laced, formal-looking house, a regular lawyer's house, you'd swear to that, with a window on each side of the yellow-brown door, with yellow-brown window-shutters, and a window over the door with yellow-brown facings. And down by the side of the coach-maker's yard, which cut into the brewer's and banker's premises, was a cunning

little yellow-brown office, where a tall boy of tallowy aspect, whose prominent wrists and ankles showed that his clothes had neglected to grow with his growth, was supposed to officiate as the clerk, at a salary as spare as himself, albeit his principal use, and that was no trifling one, was that of being blamed for everything that went wrong, (*i.e.* for the client,) not for the lawyer, of course.

Were a bill dishonoured or a paper not sent, in consequence of which Skipton's nephew had to sue, and also to charge costs, &c., he "couldn't think how it was. He gave his clerk orders, but somehow, &c., &c."

Poor clerk, with all boyish sympathies crushed from him at his early age, and with the constant practice he had in blood-sucking, is it any wonder that he became an able, expert, and thirsty blood-sucker himself in course of time?

After a short conversation with Mr.

Skipton, and looking over his books, and finding nothing there likely to suit, Mr. Skipton recollected that there was an estate about to come into the market, some fourteen or fifteen miles from Titcomb. The owner was embarrassed.

“He wasn’t sure whether his nephew had received any further commands with regard to it. They would go and see.”

Accordingly they crossed the street and plunged into the yellow-brown office, and there we will leave them.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Here we go up, up, up, and here we go down, down,
down, oh !—

Here we go backwards and forwards, and here we go
round, round, round, oh !”

THE SONG OF THE SEA-SICK.

THE morning was fine, with a light northerly breeze, a regular soldier's wind for the yachting party. Hampers travelled to and fro between Mr. Chilliwn's hotel and that well-found and fitted, fast-sailing yacht, the “Gleam.” The diplomatic steward was in very great force, the polite captain was in the full blossom and high spring tide of his “little brief

authority," and Mr. Chilliun was in all his glory, excepting when he was snubbed by the diplomatic steward, for venturing to want anything whatever to be in accordance with his own views, or when he was bullied in the most polite manner by his polite captain—or pooh-poohed in a matter-of-course manner by his friend Carysford, who ordered things as he and the captain and steward liked, and not as Mr. Chilliun liked, who was simply allowed by these high potentates and authorities the distinguished honour of paying for anything they chose to order. But Mr. Chilliun more than indemnified himself for these indignities by swelling it tremendously before the door of his hotel, and through the town, and up and down the pier—giving orders to those whom he thought he could venture to order, in a loud tone, which orders were mostly received by a thrust of the tongue into

the cheek and a side-wink between one another by the men. But the little boys and the nursery-maids, and a few of the cockney residents, regarded Mr. Chilliwn with large and fervid admiration as he rolled along (having assumed his salt water legs somewhat earlier than was necessary), with a huge spyglass, plentifully be-flag-patterned under his arm, a very rough dirty weather jacket and buttons on his body—albeit it was a fine warm spring morning—a shiny sky-scraper, with an undue amount of ribbons decorating his brows, and very short black pipe (obtained for half-a-guinea at Milos) stuffed with Caven-dish, which made him feel a little queer so early in the morning, between his teeth.

“Now you, Jack, look alive. Jump into the gig and ease off the painter, and chuck over those fenders—don’t you see she’s thumping?” quoth Mr. Chilliwn, authoritatively.

Jack, the cabin boy, who was looking carelessly on, with his hands in his pockets, looked hugely surprised.

Mr. Chilliwn had casually heard the same order given by an experienced yachtsman the day before, and treasured up the remark in his mind. It was a considerable addition to his nautical lore. Jack, however, descended slowly into the boat to execute the order, which happened, by good luck, to be rather *apropos* at the moment.

"You, Jack," quoth the diplomatic steward, who had been counting hampers, &c., and was now looking over the rail into the boat with a half-smile to two of the crew, who had just set down a large hamper of edibles.

Don't you know that Captain Rigdum always insists upon having the loblolly ropes brailed, and the powder-monkeys properly trained aft, when *he* expects company?"

"Aye, aye, sir," answered Jack, with a

diabolical grin at this piece of absurdity, while the men turned away to hide their faces.

“Then why don’t you attend to the Captain’s orders, sir?” And the steward walked away, and Mr. Chilliwn, seeing a peculiar look, rather portending a smile, pass round, and not being quite certain whether he had made an ass of himself by his orders or no, walked away also, while boy Jack threw himself back into the stern sheets, with his legs elevated in air, and indulged in an uncontrollable fit of laughter, a regular guffaw, stopping only to look up at the men and ejaculate :—

“I say, tho’, ain’t he jolly green?”

“Green,” answered one of them, “shouldn’t want fresh vegetables for a month if he only stopped aboard on us.”

“Wonders they didn’t engage him for the Harctic hexpedition to keep the scurvy off. Haw! haw! haw!”

"Haw! haw! haw!"

"Haw! haw! haw—w—w!"

Who wouldn't be a bold yachtsman?

But still the little boys and the nursery-maids looked, admired, and whispered. It was manna and consolation to Mr. Chilliwn.

Presently the party came trooping down the pier; Newton had come down by an early train to enjoy the first cruise; Ned was there, watching for a kind glance from the bright eyes of Mrs. Spelthorne. Two or three other ladies, young and beautiful, and gaily dressed, had joined them, and they were an exceedingly happy and gay party. The gig made two trips before all of them got on board. Mr. Chilliwn, steering the first boat-load a very erratic course, and neglecting to give the word "In bow," or to come alongside properly, ran the gig stem on, shooting the whole party into the middle of the boat in the utmost confusion, and almost staving in the gig's bows.

“ Well, I *am &c.’d*,” said Captain Rigdum, with suppressed wrath, at seeing that the occurrence was noticed by a rival or two on the pier, who came to see the yacht get under weigh for her first trip, and to criticise closely everything connected with her. “ Well, I *am &c.’d*—who the &c. could ever let *him* handle the yoke-lines? Yah! It’s sickening. I’ll cut this—I’ll cut it,” he grumbled to himself, as he took a short turn round, and then came once more to the gangway to help the ladies on board, who looked rather gloweringly upon the wretched Chilli. Always very polite and attentive to ladies was Captain Rigdum—a most gallant man. Order was restored; the party got on deck without further accident. The ladies went below and shook their ruffled feathers straight again, and the gig, which was but slightly damaged, (although Mr. Chilliwn subsequently paid a long bill for repairs,) returned for its second freight.

But there was balm in Gilead even for Captain Rigdum; for now, his party being seated, Mr. Carysford stepped into the boat, taking the ropes as if he knew full well what he was about (and so he did)—gave the word, “give way,” and they shot away for the yacht, holding their course as straight as an arrow, for it was slack tide, just about turning to ebb.

The yacht really looked well as she sat gracefully on the water, with her sails loose, and all ready to slip.

“Way enough—in bow,” and round came the boat with a graceful curve, just kissing the vessel’s side, and Captain Rigdum cast a glance of triumph towards the pier, as if he would have said:—

“What d’ye think of that then? Will that do for you?”

And now all at length being ready,—

“Stand by throat and peak halyards—haul,” shouted Captain Rigdum, as he

took the helm, "yeo-ho-heave-ho," and the large main-sail rose gracefully to its place, throwing its snowy folds abroad to woo the wind.

"By foresail and jib sheet—let go," and the craft, released from her moorings, swung slowly round.

"Haul aft jib sheet," and the little cutter heeled over slightly to the breeze, and the next moment was cutting the silver—no, hang it, we *must* erase that—the *muddy* waters of broad Father Thames in its downward course.

It is not necessary for us to follow Mr. Chilliwn, step by step, throughout this cruise, as there was no incident particularly interesting for some time. Suffice it to say that Mr. Chilliwn was two or three times nearly brained by the boom in the course of the day—that he got in everybody's way, and was perpetually snubbed and pushed on one side, and that every

accident, bother, or matter of forgetfulness, in regard to anything wanted, was fathered upon him; and he perpetually felt as if he had been, and still was, doing several persons several serious injuries; and when, after slipping tolerably easily down the river, they got down off the Nore, the wind chopped round to the north-east, and battling with the tide, raised a bit of a bubbling sea, and the visitors, some of them, began to feel a little queer. The unfortunate commander, who was growing yellow about the eyes himself, and beginning to feel helplessly wretched, felt from the way he was treated as if he alone was to blame—as if he had, with malice and aforethought, gone to the wind and weather office, and ordered a north-easter in his own proper person, and as if he were consequently a sort of feeble, qualmish, abashed, and miserable kind of Boreas, disturbing everybody's stomach and peace of mind, and

most notoriously and palpably out of his place and his proper element.

Ay di mi, who wouldn't be a desponding, bullied, sea-sick yachtsman?

Mr. Chilliwn certainly paid dear for the honour. Mr. Chilliwn was sitting down to leeward, he was looking at the rolling shore. What a shore that was!—it wouldn't stand still. There was one house in particular—a very white one, amongst some trees—up and down it went, and this way and that way, quite dazzling Mr. Chilliwn with its irregularities. Newton, looking pale and very unhappy, came and interchanged a few remarks with him, and then they were both silent for a time. Mr. Carysford, Ned, and one or two of the others, who seemed as if nothing could disturb them, were laughing and talking with one or two of the ladies, who stood by the companion. Their neat little hats were just peeping up above it. Their mirth and

laughter seemed unkind to Newton and Chilliwn. The waves rose and fell—rose and fell—and whirled and quivered very unpleasantly. Up went the yacht's bows—"o-o-op—here we go up, up, up,"—they held their breath—"here we go down, down, down, oh!" And the stroke fell upon their very hearts and livers—making them tremble as if they were a portion of the craft herself. Ned here advanced to them.

"Hallo, my boys, isn't this glorious?"

"Gl-gl-orious," gasped Mr. Chilliwn.

"What a fine breeze we have—a regular sneezer."

"Bee-u-utiful!"

"Feel a little queer? Have a pipe?"

A pipe! Oh, gracious! The twain shivered slightly.

"What a confounded draught! Why, you're right under the wind of the mainsail—come up to windward."

They had felt a strong wind, and they

got up and staggered to windward—receiving a slight shower of spray as they looked over.

“Lunch is ready, gentlemen,” said the diplomatic steward.

“Hurrah!” said Ned—“come along, lads, I’m as hungry as a hunter—a bit of lunch will put you both on your legs again.”

They sought the companion, and blundered down it. The smell of cookery made their stomachs heave, and as Mr. Carysford ladled out the first spoonful of the thick, steaming soup, Mr. Chilliwn and Newton simultaneously and precipitately left the table and rushed violently upon deck. It was all over with them. How odd it is that people, who are not sea-sick, have so little feeling for those who are! And yet I know no more wretched or horrible sensation. A peal of laughter followed this exploit, and the remainder

of the company, saving and excepting two of the ladies, who were groaning in the next cabin, and three of the gentlemen, acquaintances of Mr. Chilliwun, who bemoaned themselves in various parts of the vessel, ate a very plentiful and choice luncheon, and washed it down with still choicer potables. Mr. Chilliwun and Newton were prostrate for the day. They knew no more of what followed; there was a constant ringing in their ears, a quivering in their eyeballs, and an awful tearing and retching sensation in their interiors, which seemed to be rending their very vitals. Ah! it may be very laughable, but it's no joke to the sufferer, I can tell you. Oh! what a painful remembrance I have of knocking about in half-a-gale of wind for three days, in the chops of the channel, once upon a time, when the whole world seemed perpetually reeling, reeling, heaving

and thumping, and I felt as if I cared but little where it reeled to, even although it had been into the next. Ah!

“Ye gentlemen of England who live at home at ease,
How little do ye think upon the *miseries* of the seas,”

when you rashly venture on yachting without having had due experience of the same.

Then they had a little run up with a schooner yacht, which soon showed them a clean pair of heels; but there was a good deal of excitement and speculation.

“What yacht’s that, Rigdum?”

“Well, sir, I think, sir, that’s the Commodore’s, sir, fastest yacht in the fleet, sir; it takes all she knows though, ye see, to beat us.”

Of course it did, though really, to an unprejudiced looker-on, she appeared to do it easily enough. But it came on to blow harder yet—and yet harder—heavy clouds,

and gusty, were blowing up. The little cutter threshed her way along gallantly; really she behaved pretty well, considering; but she was awfully wet. Captain Rigdum began to think about taking in a reef and setting a smaller jib, when, looking away to windward for a moment, he grasped the tiller nervously.

"Stand by to cut away the main halyards; lively, boys, lively—d—n that jib, I hope the bowsprit'll stand it; but I don't think it," he muttered, "here it comes—hold on, sir," to Carysford.

There was not time to cut away the halyards before the squall struck her. Crash; something was gone.

"There goes the bowsprit, I'd give fifty pounds out of my own pocket, if I'd had the new spar in," *thought* Captain Rigdum.

Away went the jib, the cutter flew up into the wind, a sea struck her and swept along the deck, bundling all sorts of things into a

heap, and sending a considerable wash of water down into the cabin, and one or two, who were standing on the companion, with it. The top-mast went in the cap, and the "Gleam" was very little better than a wreck.

Mrs. Spelthorne had been standing outside the hatchway, and was almost washed overboard, not having hold of anything; but Ned made a dash at her, wreathed his arm round a rope, and seizing her by the clothes, pulled her inboard, and hurried her down into the cabin, wet, frightened, and grateful.

Newton and Mr. Chilliwn were fortunately holding on, and got nothing but a thorough drenching. Most fortunately at this juncture, a steamer, which was puffing and panting along behind them, came abreast, and offered them a tow up, which was most thankfully accepted. And in due time, but in miserable plight, the yachting party found themselves once more snugly esconced in the hotel; and Mr. Chilliwn made a secret vow, that this first day

should be his very last day's yachting. After a time, however, having shaken off their qualmishness, our two friends found themselves sufficiently recovered to partake of a comfortable dinner; and all being once more dry and warm, they forgot, or made light of, their misfortunes.

The cause of the accident, but this Mr. Rigdum kept to himself, lay in the fact of Mr. Rigdum's and Messrs. Cagfoot and Pottleduck's roguery. They had *not* put in "a new spar," but sheathed up, scraped, and varnished the old sprung one, flattering themselves that it wasn't sprung so badly, after all, and might do very well; and as Mr. Chilliwn was evidently nothing but a fair-weather sailor, it might not be tried." So they charged for a new one, shared the proceeds between them, and left the old one in its place.

To sum up the history of Mr. Chilliwn's yacht, with which we have no further in-

terest,—after she was repaired, he sent her round to Plymouth to be sold. Captain Rigdum *knew of a purchaser* there. Of course, Mr. Chilliwun did not accompany her, and somehow, whilst she lay at anchor, it came on to blow one day, as Captain Rigdum reported, whilst he was on shore; and, indeed, when there were only one or two hands on board; and before they could get on board again, she dragged her anchor, and went ashore, and was totally wrecked; and it unfortunately happened, that “in the confusion,” so Captain Rigdum reported, “a lot of fellows got on board under the pretence of lending a hand, and, of course, one’s always glad of assistance at such times, and not, perhaps, so particular as one ought to be, in knowing who they are, or watching exactly everything what they do, but these scoundrels, sir, could you believe it? actually made away with the plate and a lot of other valuable things, and it wasn’t found out till

hours after they were all gone ashore again, for the steward himself was ashore, visiting some relations, never dreaming of harm, and it was all very unfortunate—very.”

And Captain Rigdum was so sorry, he couldn't tell. He'd lost a good—an excellent place; and Mr. Chilliwn had always acted by him as a perfect gentleman; in fact, he was an 'onour to the sphere he moved in, and an hornament to the service he had entered; and Captain Rigdum further hoped to see Mr Chilliwn again, at some future time, in the possession of another and a finer craft, a more seaworthy craft; not quite so crank, and a leetle less 'ard in the mouth, perhaps. And if Mr. Chilliwn would kindly sign him a cheque for his salary, though really, after what had happened, he hardly liked to ask it; it seemed so like imposing on him—robbing him almost—that he would *not* ask it, if he wasn't a poor man, with a wife and family relying totally on his exertions for

support; and so he threw himself on Mr. Chilliun's generosity, for he knew his nobleness of nature, and there was no doubt but he deserved a good blowing up! (cool) and he hoped Mr. Chilliun would blow him up, for he was sure that he did deserve it, and when a man deserved that sort of thing, it did him good. It was a kindness to him, as he should be sure to remember it, and it might be the means of his avoiding such an *error* (!) in future.

What Mr. Chilliun said is not to the purpose; such eloquence and praise, such humble submission on the part of one he had always stood rather in dread of, overpowered and disarmed him. He signed the cheque.

And with profuse thanks and more compliments, Captain Rigdum took his departure.

But this was not the last of Captain Rigdum; for weeks after, Mr. Chilliun had

bills pouring in upon him from all directions, of Captain Rigdum's incurring ; and whether they were right or wrong, just, or impositions, he had to pay them.

The parting scene with the diplomatic steward was equally fine, but more imposing. It was a piece of superb acting upon the part of that well-varnished and composed scoundrel! But Mr. Chilliwn got rid of him at length ; and his bills, too, dittoed Captain Rigdum.

The yacht had gone ashore certainly, and there was great confusion, a purposed and carefully created confusion ; but at that time there was very little of anything valuable on board the "Gleam ;" everything having been carefully removed, was at that time secured and under the charge of the steward, some miles up the country.

Had Mr. Chilliwn thought it worth while to run down to Plymouth, he might have gathered a good deal of light and information

on the subject, as folks did wonder how she came to go on shore when it was not blowing so very hard, and were loud in their disapprobation of the conduct of those who had the cutter in charge at the time of the accident. But it was a nine days' wonder. The hull, &c. was bought by a shipbuilder for about ninety pounds; he soon put her to rights again, and made a very good thing of her; but we have been anticipating our story a little.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RACES.

A DUSTY road—a warm day, and a crowd of vehicles of every description, are the usual concomitant of races. And Cheatem races are not exempt from the usual concomitant. Race-courses and racing-scenes have been described again and again, *ad nauseam*. It would, I feel assured, produce some astounding results, if any honourable and learned member of the honourable and learned guild of literature and art were to move for a return of the number of fashionable novels in which a race-course

has played a conspicuous part. Why, the Derbys and Ascots alone would sum up something prodigious. So we are not going to do exactly what has been done so often, but we cannot help going over some of it.

Let us see. Of course, there is the usual gang of scoundrels. There the man in the militia jacket, who was two days ago at Newmarket, or even Chester or Doncaster, mayhap, and who got here, heaven knows how (for he doesn't look as if he had a railway fare about him, certainly), whose words, as he vociferates the usual phrases with regard to some one's c'rect card, are redolent of extravagant titles, strong tobacco, and mixed liquids. There are the nutshooters, and the ring-the-bulls, and the rows of three-shies-for-a-pennies. There are the drinking-booths—hard at it already, and hard at it will they be the whole blessed day. There is the grand stand, such as it is, and there the ring, such as it is.

There the nimble thimble-rigger, or more modern card-sharp, conversing affably with a substantial farmer and a sporting gentleman of Caucasian physiognomy; and yet, although you may see these three conversing just as they are now, upon every race-course in the kingdom, the interior of a railway-carriage somehow always dissolves their acquaintance, and they are strangers from the moment they enter one. These two men have evidently sworn and conspired together to wreck the card-sharp; for they follow him everywhere, and constantly win money of him, to that extent, indeed, that it is a wonder he continues to bet with them. There, too, are the Goloshed Galivanterers of Galicia, standing on each other's heads, arms, noses, knees, and everywhere, indeed, but where nature meant them to stand, and shewing, further, how near they can go towards dislocating every joint in their bodies without doing it. There too is the man with the bolas,

knives, balls, rings, and the vanishing doll, with the ventriloquial squeak, and the little girl in muslin and stilts, and so forth. And the man with the wonderful head-dress of brass bells. There are also the sportsmen (!) already half-drunk, the gipsies, ruffians, pick-pockets, petty turf defaulters, (reduced to drawing if they win, and running away if they lose, and being sometimes caught and put under pumps, or into ponds). The swindling, horsey-looking gent, of no particular occupation or object, but who looks a personified Tip, of feeble cunning, a swept-up waif of a betting-office. There are cheating grooms, helpers, &c., &c., &c., and all that hideous and terrible class of filthy parasites to the turf, which help to degrade it beyond any other sport pursued in England. There they are all, ladies and gentlemen, like sundry other parasites, alive and kicking. There they are—hang them!—a loathsome lot. There are a few people who are come out for a holiday, inno-

cently enough ; and there are a few more who are fond of horses for their own sake, and not for the ignoble uses they may be put to ; with these two exceptions, the horses themselves are by far the noblest creatures on the course.

About noon, Mr. Chilliwn, and his party drove on to the course in a drag. One or two officers from Cheatem barracks had joined them, and some friends of Mrs. Spelthorne's, and it was a very gay party indeed, Mr. Carysford driving, and Mr. Chilliwn, in no little state of self-glorification beside him, having taken the reins for nearly five minutes upon a thinly-occupied portion of the road, and positively passed two or three things, only sending one of them—a light cart—into the ditch, which Mr. Chilliwn, in his own terms, considered as rather “a lark” than otherwise.

About the same time, another party, in a handsome barouche, drove on to another portion of the course, the party consisting of

Sir J. Vasey and Mr. Bowers, with Charlotte and Bessie Bowers, Newton and Captain Stevens riding on either side. They had had a delightful drive, and Newton had fancied that Bessie's sunny glance rested more tenderly upon him than usual, and he had been strongly tempted to say something or other, he hardly knew what, to give Bessie some idea of what was going on in his own mind with regard to her, (as if she did not know, or as if any woman ever did not know, when a man loved her with all his heart and soul). He feared to risk something or other by being too precipitate. Ha! ha! we, of course, can laugh at him as lookers on, but it was a very serious point with Newton, that. "Did she, or didn't she? Was the pear ripe, or was it only, &c., &c." He had pulled his hair, and kicked the bed-clothes off, with windy groans over this question many times. Poor fellow! he didn't know that the pear had been ripe, ready to drop, ever since the morning when the Veteran

and the Lily stood at a certain chamber-door, that the pear had received a considerable impetus towards ripening by the little adventure in Regent Street, and although Newton had not bestowed another thought on so slight a service, beyond congratulating himself upon being enabled to render it, Bessie had thought of it often enough—we he-things cannot form an appreciation of the strong and natural admiration, the tender weakness, woman has for the strength and prowess of man. Beauty always did admire valour and prowess, in whatever form it was shewn, and a few thousand years have not altered the world in this respect.

Ay, ay, Master Newton—that one knock-down blow, that simple extension of the extensors, did you more good-service than the finest speeches, got up with the greatest care, and delivered with the greatest apparent effect, could have done. You can't conceive how a woman can admire the man who

knocks down one who grossly insults her, and *particularly if she has a kind of a sort of regard in that quarter previously.*

Yes, yes, it's "the old, old story," old but ever new, and it will be the old, old story to the end of the world. The pear was ripe enough, if Newton had but known it. The greenness was a mere delusion, which would have vanished, had he had courage to touch it and see how soft it really was.

After some squeezing and pushing, they got their carriage into a favourable spot for seeing the races, not far from the stand.

There were six races on the card, one of which was just coming off as they took their places, and two jockeys came whipping and spurring along the flat straight run-in, followed by a tail of three or four more, and amidst a Babel of sounds, "Redcap, Blackcap, six to four, seven to four, &c.," they swept past, and the course, a moment before

tolerably clear, was again crowded with the impatient spectators.

"Pay your money, old fellow. You've lost," said Mr. Carysford to Mr. Chilliwn. "Don't you see?" and he pointed to the judge's-box.

"Why? but surely the blackcap, Tear-away, won."

"Nonsense, look there. No. 2's up, and No. 2 is Mr. Higgins's Trotty Veck—look at the card."

It was unpleasantly true. In the excitement of the moment, as they came home, Mr. Chilliwn had backed the horse which appeared to be winning, but as they had some eighty or one hundred yards to get to the post, after they had passed the drag, the second horse hitherto, in about a dozen strides, collared the favourite, Tearaway, and managed to put in an appearance at the post, just by half a length.

So Mr. Chilliwn handed up a crisp,

new, ten-pound-note, which Mr. Carysford pocketed.

“Now, then, we’d better get to the stand, as we’re late, and I want to get a bet or two,” and the party descended, crossed the course, and entered the little railed-off enclosure, amidst which a triple range of seats sprung up, which formed the stand.

The enclosure was tolerably well filled, and considering the smallness and insignificance of the meeting, the betting was as brisk as could well be expected.

They are weighing for the Selling Stakes. “I’ll lay twenty pound to ten against Baretoes,” “I’ll take fifty to ten agin Campsie,” “Who’ll lay against Rag-bag?”

Mr. Carysford, just before he entered the enclosure, had stopped to interchange a word or two with a tall, stout man, with a very John Bullish countenance:—

“Put on fifty, or a hundred if you can,

for me. I'll offer to lay on Campsie, so as to create a bit of a run in the market on him, and shorten his price. You can take a bet or two with me, just to sweeten the thing a bit and to make it *look* real, and so get quietly on Baretoes as his price comes down," said the stout individual, who was Mr. Bankers, a well-known trainer and betting-man.

"But how about his temper? He's just as likely to bolt and sell us as not."

"What of that? They've orders to *make him win.*"

"All right then—what'll anybody lay against Baretoes?"

"I'll lay twenty pound to ten."

"Done with you, sir."

"I'll do it again."

"You shall—forty to twenty."

"Very good."

Mr. Carysford booked it.

"I'll take thirty-five pound to ten against Campsie," quoth a stout man, lounging into the ring.

"Hallo! Why he was at fifties just now," and there was a visible lengthening of one or two faces when they saw who it was, offering to take this short price.

"I'll lay you thirty, sir," said Carysford. At this there was further surprise.

"No, you won't—thirty-five or nothing."

"Done then."

"Will anybody else lay it."

No—nobody else would; but a few minutes after, there were several who evinced a strong desire to take it, or even a shorter price, if they could get it, many of whom Carysford accommodated; and as Campsie went up in the scale, Baretoes came down a point or two, and fifty to twenty, and even sixty to twenty, was offered and taken, and Carysford and the stout gentleman, making

a small bet or two, and ostentatiously booking it, stimulated the market and prevented any suspicion of collusion; and when, after an awkward start, Baretoes bolted right away from the course, round the gravel-pits, a hundred to one was offered freely—one or two of which long shots Mr. Carysford took, to the astonishment of those who laid them—a proceeding which rapidly closed the mouths of the hundred-to-one layers.

“Hallo! By —— they’re waiting for him!”

And the jocks on Campsie and Ragbag were actually to be seen little more than cantering easily along at the top of the course, now and then looking back for their erratic opponent, who, having had his little amusement, was now thundering along the course again, in very good style, and rapidly closing up the distance he had lost. Who now so

excited as his rivals? How the two rascals whipped and spurred *to all appearance!* Never giving their horses an inch, until it *became* a race, when it became also evident that Baretoes had still plenty of go left in him, as they all three came pounding down the course, quite close enough together to please such of the spectators as had not laid against Baretoes.

“Bravo, red—white wins—go along, old Baretoes—hurrah, Baretoes. Capital race—all together. Red—white—black—eh? And he does win, after all. No. 1 up, and no mistake.”

Baretoes won by little more than a neck—but he *did* win.

“Capital race, sir. Never saw a better, sir—by Jove, sir! That horse deserves to win, after running off the course like that, and being so far behind, and to make such a rush as he did, sir? Did ye

see him, sir?" quoth the unknowing ones, who came to see a race and nothing more.

"It's the (somethingest) robbery I ever saw in my life"—which it no doubt was—quoth the knowing ones, who hadn't been quite knowing enough, and murmurs loud and deep arose from the victims. Carysford and the stout gentleman said nothing, but calculated their winnings, and extracted them wherever they could, and drew each other distantly and markedly, as if it were all as real as possible.

Mr. Chilliwn was hit again and dubbed up smartly. He could not be quiet. He must shew that he knew something, and consequently paid for it, having been one of the hundred-to-oners when Baretoes bolted.

The next race was probably a greater robbery than the other. It was the handicap. All the money was on Tooraloo, and Tooraloo.

won easily, Carysford being this time apparently all on the wrong side, and that heavily. The stout gentleman (Mr. Bankers) not shewing much in the ring, and not, *to all appearance*, taking or laying a sixpence on the race, eagerly the winners came crowding to Carysford.

“I’ll draw a pony of you, sir.”

“I’ll draw three tens of you, sir.”

“I think you have to give me two ponies, sir,” &c., &c., and so forth.

“Allow me, gentlemen, five minutes. Deuced unlucky, to be sure. Got the pot on all the wrong way,” he said quietly, and he looked “rather white about the gills,” as a bystander remarked, who was waiting for his money. Carysford *was* a trifle pale.

“By Jove, he’s caught it this time, Tom.”

“Serve him right,” grunted Tom; “ain’t we never to have a turn out of these &c., &c., &c.’s? This’ll just square the last swindle, eh, mate?”

“Right you are, and a trifle more with me.”

“Let me see—fifty to you, sir ; forty to you, sir ; twenty to you ; one hundred to you,” said Carysford, and so on, making a little list of the sums, “I’ll pay you all—di-rect-ly. Let me see—hum,”—and he fingered the notes slowly, not immediately parting with them, however, and edging easily along, meanwhile, so as to get within ear-shot of the judge’s box, round which another small crowd was congregated, noisily discussing some very exciting and interesting point. In the midst of which crowd, the tall, stout gentleman was seen explaining something to the stewards, who looked blankly at one another.

“Well, it’s nothing to me, you see, I haven’t a sixpence on the race, I must win the stakes upon either, you see ; but, of course, he’s disqualified. I’m very sorry my fellow should have overlooked it—but it can’t be helped now.”

“Eh! what’s that?” said Carysford, sharply, and pushing through the crowd to the scene of action.

“Well, if this is the case, I don’t see but he must be disqualified,” said one of the stewards, slowly; “of course, as a winner, he should have carried the extra ten pound, though I must say—eh,” and he hesitated, looking towards the other stewards, who looked puzzled and disgusted.

“What’s this? What is the matter? anything wrong, eh?” asked Carysford.

“Simply, sir,” answered Mr. Bankers, “that Tooraloo, having won the Bumpshire plate, should have carried ten pounds extra as a winner, and not having done so, must be declared disqualified. Pray, have you anything to say? any objection to urge against that, sir?” asked Mr. Bankers, distantly and loftily.

“Oh dear no—certainly not—Indeed! really! why, that alters matters entirely,” said Carysford, with well-assumed surprise; “why,

I'm at least four or five hundred better than I thought I was, and, my good friends, it seems from this that you have to hand over instead of receiving.

"It's a —— bite—it's a —— swindle. By —— it's too bad!"

And a perfect Babel of execrations and accusations arose around.

Stepping up to a noisy, but gentlemanlike-looking man, who was loud in his disapprobation, Carysford asked sharply, and fixing the gentleman with his eye:—

"Who did you mean to insinuate had swindled you, sir?"

The gentleman quailed immediately, and stammered out of the mess.

"Of course he didn't mean Mr. Carysford. Oh, of course not."

"No, sir, I should imagine not. Pray, was I not about to pay you, when this mistake was made evident? Hadn't I the very notes in my hand, counting them out to you?"

“Well, sir, certainly that is true; you were, I must say, about to fulfil your obligations, and I—ah—”

“Yes, sir, and now it seems that you owe me fifty pounds. May I trouble you for it?”

“I—well—I must say,” and the gentleman began searching for his note-case, very unwillingly, however.

But the crowd still shouted and execrated, although one or two, seeing that there was nothing for it, blankly began to fumble in their pockets, though others still vowed and declared “they wouldn’t pay a fraction.”

Amidst the noise, a fine soldier-like looking old gentleman, who was one of the stewards, and who had been talking to his fellow-stewards, stepped forward, and holding up his hand to obtain a moment’s silence, which the crowd partially granted him:—

“Gentlemen,” he said, “be so kind as not

to settle any bets, as it is our intention to refer this case to the Jockey-Club for decision."

Whereupon there was a general clearing-up of faces. Carysford did not show by his face that he felt any annoyance, but merely said :—

"I will meet you all, gentlemen, at the Corner, on the first Monday after the decision is made public." And as he passed Mr. Bankers a few minutes afterwards, he said in an undertone :—

"I was half afraid of it."

"Looks piscatorial," answered that gentleman.

Just then Mr. Chilliwn rejoined Carysford, evidently in travail of something, and after a minute or two, as they walked arm-in-arm down the course, he said :—

"I say,—but, old fellow, look here. They're *your* horses, you know, and dont you see, you know. Look here—you must have known it

as well as Bankers, eh? you see, of course, you must, eh?"

"How should I know? Stuff. Why, I only bought them the week before last, and this occurred last year. My man bought 'em—he always buys—I expect my scamp of a man either forgot it, or made his market on it somehow."

"Ah, ah!"

"Don't you see? Of course he did. Grooms are such scoundrels, and do rob their masters so."

This reasoning probably would not have satisfied anyone short of Chilliwn. But Mr. Chilliwn retired into his maze, abundantly satisfied, and verbally "hanged all grooms. They were such confounded robbers, you know."

Ned had been close in attendance on Mrs. Spelthorne and her friends, and had lost some dozens of gloves, and sundry half sovereigns, in sundry lotteries, and, in fact, done every-

thing a *cavaliere servente* is expected to do, to make himself agreeable upon such an occasion, when, just after one of the races, as they were proceeding up the course, he heard an uproar near the carriages, and jumping on the wheel of a perambulatory machine containing small wares, in order to look over the heads of the crowd, he saw Newton fighting with his riding-whip in the middle of four or five vagabonds, who were evidently bent upon giving him a roughish handling. Some little distance up, he saw Sir John Vasey's barouche, and his sisters evidently in a great state of agitation. Sir John was just stepping down with a view to coming to Newton's assistance, leaving the girls under Mr. Bowers' charge, for Captain Stevens was not there, having fallen in with a friend, with whom he was talking at the stand.

Hastily handing Mrs. Spelthorne to the protection of another gentleman, who was behind with another of the ladies, Ned sprung

over the ropes, and hastened to the scene of action.

Ned noticed Squire Driffeld lounging against one of the carriages; and at that moment, as two of the ruffians were pressing on Newton, driving him back against the carriages, he distinctly saw the Squire, under the pretence of moving out of the way of the scrimmage, lift up his foot and give Newton a dexterous trip, which had the effect of pitching him off his balance, and causing him to measure his length on the grass. The Squire moved away with a grin of satisfied malice on his face. But the next moment, before the grin had left his face, face and all disappeared within his hat, and he got a blow under the ear that sent him spinning. A dirty, but powerful-looking fellow had ignominiously bonneted the Squire in the moment of his triumph, and then deliberately knocked him, as the saying is, 'out of time.'

"Hallo, 'ere! wot's all this 'ere?" he

shouted, as he sprung in front of Newton, who was picking himself up slowly, Ned at the same moment having disposed of one of the scamps, who was aiming a dangerous blow at Newton's head with a snuff-box stick. "Hit 'em up, sir, they're all cocks—that's the way to do it," and the sound of Mr. Tightner's knuckles, for he it was, coming in disagreeable contact with another opponent's eye, was plainly to be heard. "Now then, ah—would you?" and down went another; Sir John Vasey here came up, and the rout of the foes became general.

The crowd, whose sympathies had been divided, now declared, as crowds usually do, with the victors.

"Duck 'em—duck 'em!"

"Ah, so do," shouted Mr. Tightner; "this 'ere gent's a real good gent, and no mistake, good to a cove when he's 'ard up. That 'ere feller ain't nothin' but a blackguard," and Mr. Tightner pointed to a swellishly-dressed,

somewhat disheveled and dissipated young man, with a blue mark across his face, who had been very active in the crowd, keeping himself out of harm's way, but inciting Newton's foes to "pay him out."

"Stand on one side, Tightner," said Newton, now once more on his legs; and pushing Tightner on one side, he sprung towards this individual, and whirling the lash of his whip round his head, brought it with all his force down on the head and shoulders of the unfortunate party.

"Oh, my eye's cut out," roared the fellow.

"I won't leave a bit of you as big as a sixpence," said Newton, half mad with rage, and whack—whack—crack came the whip—sometimes on one part, sometimes on another—head, shoulders, legs, all came in for their share. Dancing and roaring with pain, at length he fairly took to his heels and bolted. Newton was too much out of breath to follow him,

but tossing a sovereign amongst the crowd, sung out:—

“There’s a sovereign for you—duck him, boys.”

“Hooroar! Come along, my hearties.”

And plunging into the crowd, Mr. Tightner and three-fourths of it set off in chase of the unhappy delinquent.

“Hallo!” said Newton, as he caught sight of Squire Driffield getting himself off—“why, surely he did not take part against me?”

“Only tripped you up—that’s all.”

“I thought it was very odd, and could not make it out how it was I went down so suddenly.”

“Oh, he did it, I assure you, and I saw it; and better than that, he was just grinning to himself over it, when your dirty friend there dashed his hat over his eyes, and hit him under the ear in the neatest way you ever saw.”

“Ah! Tightner—yes, to be sure—where is he? I want to see him and thank him. Gad! his assistance was rather useful.”

“Oh, he’s away with the crowd, pursuing yon unhappy wretch, whom you towelled so frightfully; and now, what was it all about?”

“Why, you see, some of those disgusting women, who sing those filthy songs, for which the pillory and stocks should be the reward,* struck up their bestialities close by us. In fact, we could hear every word. I slipped down quietly and ordered them away, threatening them with the police if they didn’t go. That

* How such an abomination as this, which now infests every course in the kingdom, unchecked and uninterfered with, can be tolerated for one moment, I cannot understand. The evil, and it is a disgraceful one, has increased amazingly of late years. What is the racing world about? Does it want to drive the last rag and pretence of decency from it?

person, who was with one or two others, thought proper to say that they should stay, offered them half-a-sovereign to go on, which of course they did, worse than ever. Well, I was in a fearful rage, as you may suppose, but of course I couldn't, I wouldn't have a row about it, and so I represented as mildly as I could that there were ladies near, and that every word could be heard in our carriage. Whereupon, turning his head round, and staring insolently at your sisters, he applied an epithet to them, for which no doubt he's sorry enough now. Then, of course, there was nothing else for it. I cut him across the face, collared and pulled him out of the carriage, when those scoundrels—hangers-on of the women, I suppose, set on me—and that's all."

"Thanks, old fellow,—thanks. I think I'll take a little walk, in the hope of meeting that individual myself; and what

you've left of him shall account to me. But how came the squire there?"

"Oh, I don't know. He happened to be in the neighbourhood, I suppose, and came up when the row commenced."

They here joined their party, and nothing was said upon the subject, as the greater part of the scrimmage was visible from the carriage. Bessie looked excessively pale, and the whole party seemed so much upset, that, ordering their horses as soon as Captain Stevens rejoined them, he having been away during the entire row, much to his grief, they left the course, and started for home. Newton was rather stiff from his fall, and having sprained his ankle slightly, he was persuaded to take a seat in the carriage, and Sir John Vasey very kindly rode his horse home.

And that ride, what shall be said of it? Of course, Bessie sat next to Newton. Very little *was* said, but if looks, or tones,

or an involuntary pressure of hands (about which, by-the-bye, Newton tormented himself all night, it was so very slight that Newton could not decide whether it was intentional, or only accidental muscular motion) I say *if* they would tell anything, they would say Bessie Bowers was undeniably spooney, very spooney on Newton Dogvane, if he only knew it. After seeing his sisters and their party off, Ned sauntered slowly along down the course towards the drag, which was at some distance. He was vowing vengeance against the fellow whom Newton had horsewhipped, and wishing he might have the luck to fall in with him—a wish, however, which was not gratified—when just as he was passing between two carriages, he stopped suddenly. Some one was speaking in the carriage behind which he was standing, and the voice arrested his attention. He passed through, and then walked easily by the carriage, a neat-looking

brougham, and glanced in. The occupants were a lady and gentleman. The lady was quietly dressed, but there was an unmistakable leaven about her, which told that she was not exactly what she wished to appear. The gentleman was a handsome-looking fellow, with an abundant moustache and curling black beard and whiskers. "How odd," thought Ned; "well, I'm mistaken, I suppose, but I could have sworn it was his voice, too." The party had just lunched, and were drinking champagne, clinking their glasses together, and a very unmistakable look passed between them. Ned passed on, hearing the sound of the gentleman's voice again, as he did so; and he again seemed to pause. He walked on, however, and presently came back once more on the other side of the carriage, catching the eye of the driver as he went by. The man nodded, and Ned remembered his face; he was the head man at a job-master's in

London, with whom he sometimes had a little dealing. Again he glanced into the carriage. The gentleman's head was very close to the lady's, and he was addressing some very confidential remark to her, and she, thereupon, leant back in the carriage, and laughed in a remarkably free and easy manner, which left no doubt about *her*. The gentleman laughed too, and then, just as Ned had passed the carriage, put his head out of the window and looked down the course. Ned had not passed more than a couple of yards, and turning round, he stooped down to avoid observation, pretending to be occupied with brushing a speck of dust off his trowsers, looking silyly up as he did so, and as the gentleman's head was turned sideways from him, he remarked a peculiar mole just under the ear, upon the neck, by the top of the whisker. Turning away, and drawing a long breath, he got out of sight behind some

carriages, and indulged in a hearty, but silent, fit of laughter :—

“Ha! ha! ha! I thought I couldn’t be mistaken. Ha! ha! ha! what a joke, to be sure! Well, wonders will never cease. By Jove, it’s the best thing I’ve heard of for some time. Hang me, if it isn’t. A moustache and a beard too! Lucky I know the driver.”

Then turning round, he shook his finger in the direction of the carriage, and said :—

“Take care—take care what you are up to, my friend, for I’ve got my thumb on you now, and I’ll keep it there.” And with another hearty laugh, he continued his walk, towards the drag.

The party were all assembled—all in high spirits—all drinking champagne, claret-cup, and what not. All laughing, joking, and eating alternately, as is the fashion at races. Carysford had made a goodish day of it so far, not intending to tempt *fortune* further.

Mr. Chilliwin had made a bit of a mess of his first attempt as a betting-man, being handy to a couple of hundreds minus, which lay snugly reposing in Mr. Carysford's pocket. But what of that? *Dum vivimus vivamus*. "Mrs. Spelthorne, may I have the honour? Mademoiselle Julie, will you do me the favour?" and so forth. The ladies ate Mr. Chilliwin's lunch, destroyed his confectious, and drank up his choice wines most graciously. Ned, of course, at once joined in the humour of the hour, and soon became the life and soul of the party. The gallant seventy-elevens, good fellows, felt they were in for a good thing, and did not regret the forsaken mess, but enjoyed themselves to the fullest. Then they took a tour of the course, and entered into the minor sports, and had a little try at most of them, and snuff-boxes were smashed, monkeys upset, cocoa-nuts broken, and pin-cushions sent flying to any extent—Mr.

Chilliwn shining greatly by hitting the proprietors on the shins, head, arms, anywhere, in his abortive efforts. In fact, they did all the silly things which people think it incumbent on them to do at races, after which they betook themselves to their carriage, and the ladies not objecting to smoking, huge cigars were set a-going, and so, with all sorts of practical little absurdities on the road, they drove home.

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